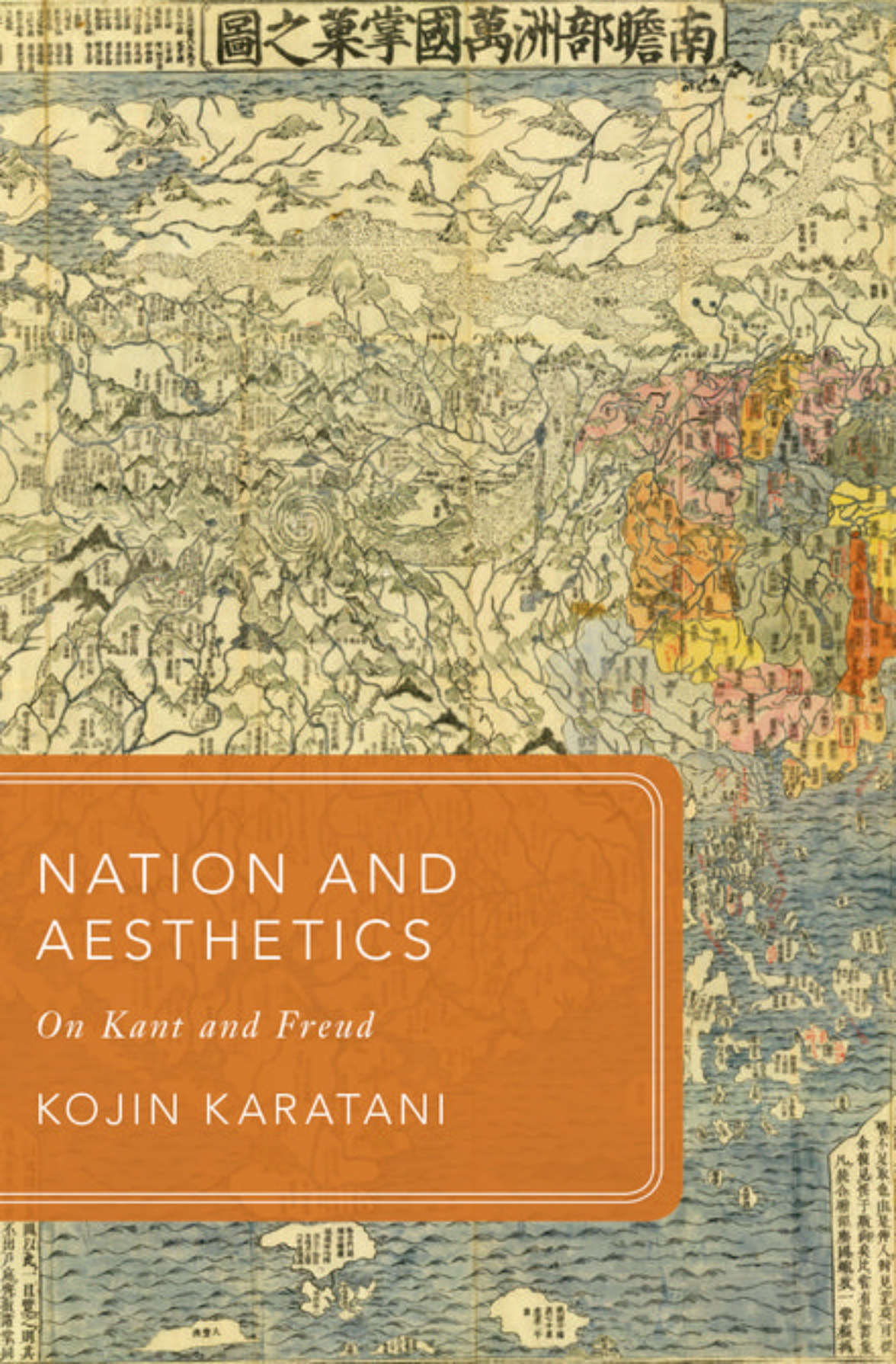


南瞻部洲萬國掌圖



NATION AND
AESTHETICS

On Kant and Freud

KOJIN KARATANI

風以義一且覽之則其
不出戶庭而能知天下

雖不足取也但見其
余觀見世于觀御我比
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NATION AND AESTHETICS

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Nation and Aesthetics

Kojin Karatani (translated by Jonathan E. Abel, Darwin H. Tsen, and Hiroki Yoshikuni)

NATION AND AESTHETICS

On Kant and Freud

KOJIN KARATANI

TRANSLATED BY JONATHAN E. ABEL,

DARWIN H. TSEN, AND HIROKI YOSHIKUNI

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PREFACE: ONE KARATANI, INDIVISIBLE

BEYOND TURNS

Whether backward, left, right, literary, linguistic, pragmatic, ideological, philosophical, ethical, or otherwise, turns tend to order narratives about how we discuss the careers of our best thinkers. Turns suggest a veering from a path, indeed a single path through and around difficult terrain; and yet the thought of many of those thinkers said to have made a turn challenges us to work against such dominant linear paradigms and attempt a history or understanding of thought without turns. Writing about the work of Japan's most globally recognized philosopher, Kojin Karatani, too often takes for granted the fact of a turn, denying, for instance, reading his early work as already pregnant with the possibilities born out in his very different later work. When we refocus our understanding of what is meant by the rhetoric of a turn from spatial movement over time or *volte face* to multi-vocal singularity, we are forced to reconsider what we thought we understood in the earlier and later work; and we can begin to understand the seemingly mercurial paths of Karatani's thought. This outlook is particularly necessary for approaching the book in hand, which includes previously published essays rewritten for inclusion in a larger more contemporary framework.

Rather than trying to reconnect writings dispersed in multiple fields or to follow the linear continuities to delineate a single unified path tracking Karatani's development as a thinker, what I want to suggest is that we overlay distinct images of Karatani before and after his presumed turn in hopes that the composite, layered image will give us a clearer, more realistic, and historically accurate picture of Karatani's goals and work over his career.

One risk here, of course, is that the composite image will become a mess, so incongruous, incommensurable, or antinomial, and the gap between the two images so great, that no possible mode of cognition will be able to connect or compare them to render an understandable single image; thus, through this production of a double vision we will have finally proved the already overwhelming case made for a break or a turn. Another risk will be that the two images will overlap so well, that no break or schism will be shown; and although this might prove my point (that there is only one Karatani), according to Karatani's own theories, it will yield no new insight, because antinomies themselves are the ground for insight. These risks assessed, we can now set our binocular sights on understanding Karatani as one.

In order to begin to conceive of Karatani beyond the rhetoric of a turn, it will be useful to admit first the problem with denying a turn by recounting multiple claims and pieces of evidence for a turn. Second, the purportedly two different strains of Karatani's thought between which a turn is said to occur will need defining and parsing. Last, we can admit the latent continuities and salient features which rise and fall in importance over time throughout his work by briefly examining how the present volume overlays descriptions of Karatani. The contention here is that, though change clearly occurs, the nature of change is neither binary nor sequential, but a tuning of the volume of already present background sounds and noise to a higher, more focused resonance.

ORIGINS OF A MODERN JAPANESE TURN

We should not expect continuity or linear progression from a writer with a career as long and a subject matter as varied as that of Karatani. For over forty years he has written about language, culture, philosophy, economics, and politics. Consistently, he has been a provocative thinker whose twenty-seven books, countless journal articles and interviews, and myriad speeches, ranging in subject matter from literary criticism to architecture, history, and nuclear power, have been the center of public debate and discussion in Japan.

The motley dissemination of Karatani's work too suggests any search for uniformity to be simply misplaced. The translations of his books and articles into many languages, including Spanish, Turkish, French, Chinese, and Korean, stand as evidence that his influence extends far beyond the Japanese language and archipelago of Japan. In 1982, Karatani revolutionized the study of Japanese literature in Japan with

his *Nihon kindai bungaku no kigen*. Translated into English as *The Origin of Modern Japanese Literature* in 1993, the book not only transformed the study of Japanese literature in the West, but also deeply impacted the study of all non-Western literatures; more recently, selections from that work have been anthologized in Norton's *Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. And Karatani's contribution to contemporary thought extends far beyond area studies and literary criticism alone. For instance, philosophical innovations in his *Transcritique* and, indeed, his concept of a "parallax view" became the subject of Slavoj Žižek's *Parallax View*, perhaps one of the few openly acknowledged borrowings from Asia by continental theory.¹ In the context of such a varied and luminous career, an expectation of continuity or even a singular unified and linear pathway through a career seems ludicrous at best. Furthermore, variety does not necessarily imply a turn. Variety of this sort suggests multiplicity, unpredictability, and breadth. What the narrative of a turn suggests is a continuous line with a new direction or vector, and, further, that the new vector begins at a particular moment and with a specific trajectory. This is the case even for a gradual turn for which the precise moment of its beginning may be more difficult to identify. But whether conceived of as an about face, right angle turn, or incremental gradual shift, the narrative of turn suggests a change in position and a historically divided career.

As proof of the widespread commonality or popularity of this career division, we do well to look at that canonical instantiation of public thought and memory—Wikipedia. The Japanese Wikipedia page on Karatani divides his publishing career into two—part one from 1980–2000 and part two from 2000 on.² Beyond the clean break at the millennium proposed by that representation of popular opinion in the participatory reference source however, there are several more authoritative sources in which Karatani himself recognizes his changing positions. Evidence for a break comes as early as 1985, when in the addendum to *Introspection and Retrospection* (*Naisei to sokō*) titled "Towards a 'Turn,'" Karatani first connects his Marxist position with Wittgenstein through the figure of teaching:

Philosophy begins in introspection. In other words, standing in the position of learning or receiving, philosophy is shut off in "interiority." We must change this attitude and try to stand in the position of teaching or selling. My understanding begins and ends with this plain and difficult problem.³

Here Karatani is at once engaging with the post-enlightenment tradition of philosophy since at least Descartes as he pushes toward a more worldly

engagement through Marx and Wittgenstein. In this view, his previous work focusing on the advent of an interiority forming in the Meiji period through literary change begins to look too cut off from the real world.

A decade later in the preface to the English language translation of *Architecture as Metaphor* (1995), Karatani refers to a similar turn but gives it a non-Wittgenstein-ian origin. Karatani openly sees this struggle as a shift in his thinking and assigns its origin to Edward Said.

I . . . found it impossible to reintroduce such an exteriority in my work by following the preexisting line of formalization. A more decisive “turn” was required. Consequently, I abandoned the Japanese edition of *Architecture as Metaphor* and the subsequent work *Language, Number, Money* halfway through. In this state of stagnation, trapped in a cul-de-sac, what struck me quite forcefully was Edward Said’s book *The World, the Text, and the Critic*, in particular the essay entitled “Secular Criticism.”⁴

Here Karatani articulates the same necessity to become more engaged with the world he had mentioned years earlier on his encounter with Wittgenstein. If he found the need to step out of solipsism in the Wittgenstein, he finds the necessity to connect the philosophical “interior” with the “exterior” world now in Edward Said’s essay, which itself is largely dedicated to the question of the generic distinctions within criticism (Said identifies four strains of criticism). This question of generic label for critical work itself becomes a major part of Karatani’s self-reflection on his work. Indeed, this definitional anxiety is a struggle latent within the material in the present volume.⁵ But before we address the problem of genre directly, it will be useful to continue to track how Karatani frames his career in terms of turn.

In 1996, the idea of a turn is directly referred to again in a roundtable discussion with Zaitzu Osamu, Hasumi Shigehiko, Maeda Hideki, and Asada Akira in the journal which Karatani co-edited with Asada called *Critical Space* (*Hihyō kūkan*). There Karatani critiqued the widely touted linguistic turn of deconstruction and claimed Deleuze to be the author of his move away.

My idea was that all formalism was solipsism, and, further, that structuralism was but one variety of it. That which is called form is something that constructs the self itself. And form itself was first discovered through self-reflection. Structuralism, which seems like it negates solipsism, cannot avoid that solipsism itself.

What can be done to get out of this? At that point, what I thought of the introduction of paradoxes like destruction which is led by the self-referential paradoxes of formalism, and formalism which establishes the elimination

of self-referential paradoxes. And what came out was exactly what Deleuze called rhizomal multiplicities. . . . I thought that was the only way to disrupt solipsism, but that itself was a kind of solipsism (chuckle) and from that point I broke down. And about two years passed until I fundamentally changed attitude during *Investigations 1* [1986]. So the level that had come before was only slightly different and I think there I am closest to Deleuze.⁶

Here we find the move from interiority repeated in the noted turn from solipsism occasioned by an engagement with Deleuze. Deleuze is said to have tuned Karatani's conversion to critical history or philosophical reflection.

In the 2004 special issue of the journal *Kokubungaku* (*National Literature*) devoted to Karatani's philosophy, Karatani again returns to talking about his career in terms of a turn. In an interview between Karatani and Sekii Mitsuo titled "The Turn towards Critical Philosophy" (*Hihan tetsugaku e no tenkai*) appearing in that issue, the focus is clearly on a turn, but the specific sub-section titled "The Turn from Criticism and Commentary to Critique and Judgment" (*Hiyō kara hihan e no tenkai*) deals with the question of critical genre more generally:

There was the special 1989 edition of *Kokubungaku* on "battling *hihyō*" (criticism), and I think at that time *hihyō* had broad meaning. "*Hihyō*" was (and for me myself that meaning would change, but) generally *bungei hihyō* (cultural/art/literary criticism). Even in 1989 it held that meaning at the same time including the meaning of a Kantian critique. I even translated *hihan* (critique) as *hihyo* (criticism) in that article. Following Nishida . . . I thought *hihyō* (criticism) was equal to *hihan* (critique). . . . However, up until that time I hadn't really read Kant yet. In the nineties, I began to read Kant in earnest.⁷

So, like many critical theorists in the 1990s (from Spivak and Butler to Žižek and Habermas), Karatani frames his own turn as a Kantian turn. Distancing himself from what he saw as *seorī* (theory) in the US context, Karatani recognizes in this interview that the theory turn in US literary studies coincided with a literary turn in philosophy with Rorty and Derrida: "I, however, have been engaged in literary criticism (*bungaku hihyō*) from the start, so that form itself gave me no particular excitement. On the contrary, I wanted more and more to do philosophical work."⁸ And this is where Sekii labels the turn as a turn toward pragmatism and a turn toward activism, signified by Karatani's short-lived NAM (New Associationist Movement) project, which sought, among other innovations, local exchange economies to disrupt the flow of capital at the nation-state level. This was a turn from

the language play of literature and deconstruction toward an engagement with the world and also toward economic philosophy.

[W]hen I came to Kant, I had the feeling I was walking down the so-called royal path of philosophy, the orthodox course of philosophy. . . . [W]hen I was called a philosopher abroad at first it made me extremely uncomfortable, I even argued against it for a while, but from that point I began to think, well, if people call me it, maybe its alright.⁹

Karatani's unease with the label of philosopher may itself reveal the already mentioned ongoing concern Karatani felt about the solipsism and interiority of literary criticism; after all, philosophy too has been critiqued as being too insular and abstract for real practical effects. But his eventual coming to terms with the title may well reflect an acceptance that he was finally being labeled in a way that was more accurate to the work he had been seeing himself as doing for a long time.

Whether in the mid-eighties, mid-nineties, or at the millennium, whether under the influence of Wittgenstein, Said, Deleuze, or Kant, what all these narratives of a turn suggest more than anything is two distinct bodies of work characterized as a before and an after. The rhetoric of a turn presupposes the situation of a break, a gap between two incongruous objects. And just as turn presupposes break, a break necessitates the existence of two ontologically differing entities. In fact, it is only possible to understand the unities within the multi-layered thought by examining multiple claims and locations for a break and two or more purported Karatanis.

TWO OR MORE KARATANIS, TOO MANY . . .

What the narrative of a turn presupposes is that there are at least two different Karatanis: 1) the historicizer of formal aesthetics and their deeper implications beyond discourse; 2) the radical philosopher who continually pulls the historical rug out from under the historicizer. And though the temptation to mark the shift between these two Karatanis as occurring at some historically locatable moment in the mid-1980s immediately following the challenge of his "method" to the Japanese and then later to the US academies of Japanese literary studies might be overwhelming, we should attempt to resist this as a futile search for nonexistent origins, recognizing the philosophical tensions already present in his more historical/cultural work. In other words, just as Karatani (like the Foucault he emulated) denied origins and zero points even as he archeologically investigated

their sedimentary layers, we need to give up the search for a hard and fast moment of a turn in favor perhaps of rereading of the two strains of Karatani's thought. We can label them two Karatanis, hereafter K and K'.

K

The canonical Karatani or K is the early body of work and the scholar who entered the intellectual scene in his writing about consciousness and nature in the work of Natsume Sōseki in 1969, continued in 1975 with the *Disease Called Meaning*, theoretically retested structuralism and poststructuralism through the Marxist theory of capital during the 1980s, and connected consumer society with postmodernism from 1984 through 1995, resulting in such work as *Architecture as Metaphor*. K alone was called a literary scholar and a cultural critic. But such sobriquets could not last long; as Karatani would later recall in the defining of another moment of turn, "After 1992 (*Investigations III* or *Transcritique*) I didn't consider literature."¹⁰ We can overlay this notion of a turn of his critical gaze to non-literary objects with the turn from solipsism. But the origin of this turn may have less to do with object or critical awakening than with critical reception.

Fukuda Kazuya's critique on the eve of one of the moments thought to represent a shift highlights some of the problems with the reception of Karatani in the early stage, or as K, namely that the work could be appropriated and turned to rather conservative and uninteresting ends:

Lately, Mr. Karatani boldly changes position to the left or right in pursuit of much literary criticism. At those moments in front of his readership, staging a show with brilliant ideas, he continues to be a navigator who always seeks the right literature. But how long will important readers, who also asked him for a lullaby remain listening?¹¹

As it sedimented into a mode of reading that could be easily appropriated and applied to seemingly every cultural phenomenon, Fukuda implied that Karatani's innovative thinking, whether about Meiji literature, Sakaguchi Ango, or Nakagami Kenji, might begin to alienate readers in its variety and breadth. It might cease to have a radical and innovative edge when moved from its correct path, Fukuda suggested. To a certain extent, the opposite happened; the literary critique ceased to have a radical edge as it was repeated in a decade long search for modern origins of other cultural products carried out by scores of scholars. Predicated by Karatani's ground breaking work, we had the origins of the *shishōsetsu* (I-novel), origins of

classical literature, origins of *bishōnen* (beautiful boys) literature, the discovery of not just landscape, but of *buraku* literature, among others.¹² So it would seem Karatani's later work might be a natural reaction of radical thinking to the conservative ends to which earlier cutting edge work had been put.¹³ Sabu Kohso, the translator of *Architecture as Metaphor* even writes: "By Karatani's own admission, 'Researches'[alternatively *Investigations*] marked a decisive turn. It functions as a fundamental critique of his previous work."¹⁴

K'

K' has been more of a philosopher/activist and less of a critic/pundit. He has sought new paths that will not simply become sedimented schools of reading that could be easily institutionalized within the Borromean knot structure of capital-nation-state which he describes in the present volume and elsewhere. In short, K' has sought to become more of a roaming critic, more worldly along the lines suggested in Said's book; that is, more engaged in exposing historical injustice.

Karatani explains:

From around 1998 until now I have been engaged in coming to understand a multitude of things with a single stroke. For instance, explaining the structural relationships of state, nation, and capitalist economics through the borromean knot. . . .

In the 1990s I wrote a bunch of essays on nation, but now I have rewritten them from a different standpoint. I organized them as *Nation and Aesthetics* in the fourth volume of the Iwanami collection. And I think this will become my fourth English language book.

Until now focus on Japanese materials, has made them appear to lag behind the standards of the west, to seem distorted, or to conversely be treated as special exceptions. In *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, I think I showed how that was not the case. As you [Sekii] said before, people from Bulgaria and Finland who read the English translation have said what this book was written about happened the same way in my country too. I have even heard this from some Greek scholars. And it goes without saying for Korea and China too. It is even the case with Mexico I have been told. There is a figure in modern Mexico that looks exactly like the Sōseki described in my book they said. . . . In the past I think it seemed Japanese things were particularly special. However, now what happened in Japan at the very least was not an exceptional case.

When the material is Japanese, writing is really quite difficult. On one hand, Japanese people tend to think “when you write about Japan, foreigners won’t think to read it.” And, in the case when they do get noticed by foreigners, conversely, they are considered really different from the norm, with strange ways and manners.¹⁵

What is important to understand is that Karatani’s work has never been far from philosophical. In fact, what the present volume (which would figure as a transitional state between cultural criticism and philosophy) may show, perhaps more explicitly than his previous work, was that his work had always already been philosophical, if by that we mean inspired by the transcendental critique of Kant. *Nation and Aesthetics* is thoroughly transitional only insofar as many of its essays were originally composed during the time from the mid-1990s when Karatani is said to have been transitioning from the critic to the philosopher. But then the entirety of these essays were rewritten as chapters for publication in 2004 and placed under a new frame with new introductory and concluding chapters long after a supposed turn. This suggests that we need to read the present work either as that of two Karatanis or, as I argue, as one multivocal Karatani. And this multivocal reading of *Nation and Aesthetics* should allow us to see the entire career in a way that avoids the rhetoric of a turn.

DOUBLE-VISION, PARALLAX, OR COMPOSITE

In recent years Karatani has argued for a double vision of sorts—one that passes back and forth between two antipodal positions in order to arrive at third position of radical new perspective (the position of a transcritique). Taking this as a cue, I think we may reread the overtly stated divide in Karatani’s career as a continuity for the beneficial ends of illuminating the submerged philosophical innovations of his early career and the oblique cultural criticisms within his later work.

To do so, it helps to consider what may be a niggling point about Karatani’s theory of parallax. Indeed, it is a point of rhetoric—the language with which Karatani formulates or reformulates the Kantian notion of parallax is crucial to understanding not only parallax as such, but also the question of a turn in his thinking. Karatani’s successive descriptions of parallax provide us with a kind of performative of parallax in action; that is to say, the translation and appropriation, restatement and interpretation performed by Karatani provide us with tangible moments of parallax between Kant and Karatani that enhance his own overt discussion.¹⁶

In other words, in my reading Karatani becomes precisely the performative theorist that he supposedly had distanced himself from because, for all the rejection of linguistic tricks and moves toward the world, Karatani becomes an (albeit unwitting, unintentional) performative theorist, but to very pragmatic, worldly ends.

If parallax is simply the perceived change in an object when an observer's position changes, it incorporates both time and space variables. And yet in Karatani's version of parallax, the shift in place and position is emphasized over that of time to the point that time is all but eliminated from the concept. In many instances, it appears that the parallax enabling a transcritique is itself timeless. Karatani writes that he sees Kantian "antinomy as a pronounced parallax"¹⁷ and it is the holding up of parallax or the maintenance of antinomy itself that gives one variously a "transcritical stance," a "transcritical position," or helps to put one in a "transcritical critical space" at "the site of transcritique," "the space of transcritique," the "transcritical juncture." In this way, Karatani emphasizes the space of, and argues for, a retrospective transcritique over the time in which such a critique would need to develop. To be sure, Karatani will emphasize the spatial component in Kant's transcritical position because he lived outside the center in Königsberg and his own transcritique as enabled by transitioning from Japan to Brooklyn and back or supporting the Hanshin Tigers baseball team as opposed to the canonical Tokyo Giants, the spatial structuralism of these seemingly deterministic poor explanations of the Marxist scholar who should by all accounts be at least as interested in the history or time of the spatial location.

Of course, these are minor anecdotal examples. And while Karatani recognizes the time component in his work, the issue of temporality is often quickly obfuscated. For instance, when he analyzes Heidegger's reception of Kant he writes:

Heidegger interpreted the Kantian transcendental critique exclusively along its vertical vector. . . . For me, by contrast, transcendental critique should be considered and practiced—at the same time—along its transversal vector. And I call this multidimensional oscillating engagement "transcritique."¹⁸

In the course of two sentences, a slippage is clear. First, Karatani claims that a transcritique happens at once, in an instant, the instant in which Kant is considered along the vertical vector and "at the same time" along the transversal vector. Then in the following sentence, he refers to transcritique as an "oscillating engagement"; oscillation, of course, meaning to swing back and forth over time as in a pendulum, never settling in one position, a view more akin to traditional notions of parallax.

I would like to argue Karatani is most interested in a instantaneous binocular model for parallax, one that uses both eyes at once only to arrive at a

more penetrating third (or 3D?) view, as opposed to the traditional Kantian view of parallax that presumes a cycloptic view moving over time (and it should be noted that recent cognitive science has all but proven this switching or fluxing over time between a dominant image and a subordinate image to be the brain's method for rendering the sense of three dimensionality). Karatani is most interested in parallax as a moment of apprehension that follows such movement, and only tangentially as a process from one point to another leading to the moment of apprehension. It makes some sense therefore to try to understand the present volume in terms of an instant (the time of the reading of the object) rather than in its history of composition. In other words it makes sense to read what we have before us in terms of the antinomies and multiplicities it presents to us.

Nation and Aesthetics poses a problem for the rhetoric of a turn in Karatani's work because it is categorizable neither into the early cultural/literary K criticism nor into the K' philosophy of the late period. Since the history of the palimpsest composition is buried in the finished product here and since Karatani now authorizes the version in our hands, *Nation and Aesthetics*, which combines aesthetic reflection with world-level philosophical reflection, should not be read as the work of the critic before or after a turn, but rather as a parallax or transcritical work that does not bridge or synthesize so much as force into dialogue materials that would seem on the surface not to fit together. This is comparative and synthetic work at its best and most innovative. It is this comparative work forcing into dialogue two (and more) incommensurables which is not only the moment of the transcritique, but also precisely the work we need to do when thinking about K and K' as the one inimitable and indivisible Karatani. The book does not bridge Karatani of the 1990s with Karatani of the 2000s so much as allow us to see how the two have always been one. And this translation of the work adds perhaps yet another layer to the constant reworking of the work.

Drawing on Kant's conception of the nation as an aesthetic object, Karatani shows how nations of people, governing states, and the economic system of capitalism were inextricably bound since their modern origins. Because the book is deeply comparative and wide-ranging in discipline and topic (with chapters on Kant and Freud, Okakura and Fenollosa, Saussure and Tokieda, among others), the argument Karatani builds is descriptive of global modernity. But the book is not merely descriptive criticism that clearly explains and orders how we understand the world. Implicit in its argument, readers will find, is hope for the construction of a new aesthetics and, therefore, a new way of ordering the capital-nation-state Borromean knot which the book amply identifies.

As someone who has considered his own career as divided by a turn and as a scholar who was deeply interested understanding the phenomenon of political conversion (*tenkō*) in writers from the 1930s, Karatani

has long been engaged with working through the issue of change over time.¹⁹ We do well to think about Karatani himself in terms of his argument against the notion of a turn in Wittgenstein's work: "It is also wrong to regard this period as a transition between Wittgenstein's two philosophical periods, a 'turn' from early to late."²⁰ So in addition to taking Karatani's view of parallax to understand the present volume we also do well to take his understanding of turns. *Nation and Aesthetics* necessitates a rethinking of the notion of an epistemic turn in Karatani's later work, highlighting what had been true all along, the constant and continuing desire for a radical critique.

In Karatani's ethical search for an outside position, freedom might seem like its own opposite. The continual quest for a transcendental positionality—a search for freedom from time and space—might resituate a presumed origin or birth as ethical because it will always destabilize the status quo narrative in the first instance; yet, destabilization is a trick that once learned can itself become status quo. In terms of space, this search for new frontiers has been used as justification for violence, for imperial expansion. In terms of time, looking backward or forward has often meant an ignoring of inequalities here and now to argue that change has already happened and solved our major problems or for the promise of a better future. But in recognizing these problems Karatani has tried to move beyond them, arguing for an unsettling and continual necessity to search for or dream of other possibilities.

The work of Karatani challenges us to see the world differently, to dream of alternate possibilities, even as those possibilities cling to familiarly lofty ethical ideals of understanding our world and making it better. The work is heir to a great tradition of enlightenment thinkers but is necessarily from an outsider position (like that of some of the most canonical of philosopher/critics from Kant to Derrida, Marx to Freud). *Nation and Aesthetics*, then, is not simply a transitional work of a literary critic becoming a philosopher, it is the means by which we can understand the rift or dual antinomous positionality of Karatani's thought as being singular, continuous, and extending through his career.

Jonathan E. Abel

INTRODUCTION: EXCHANGE AND GIFT

How can a world republic be possible? This is the question Kojin Karatani has been trying to answer ever since the Soviet Union dissolved. Karatani was “deeply in awe of Marx” and his admiration for *Capital* “has only intensified year by year,” but before 1989 Marxist states and communist parties were objects of his rebuke because he believed that “the struggle against capitalism and the state” should be sustained “endlessly in response to each contradiction arising from a real situation,” and hence that “ideas of future” such as a world republic were unnecessary. When the socialist bloc disappeared in reality, however, Karatani realized that his “critical stance had been paradoxically relying on their being.” In his attempt to overcome capital and the state, Karatani negated the validity of existing Marxist states. By doing so, he could feel he had “done something” without presenting any concrete idea, but, once those states had vanished, his critique of them became meaningless. It was revealed that the place of his critique had been secured only in contrast to the reality of the socialist states. Without their existence, his stance could even become indistinguishable from capitalist ideology since capital always transforms itself without recourse to an idea or a grand narrative. Instead of merely being critical of actual attempts to abolish the state and capital, therefore, Karatani came to feel that he had to say “something positive to change the reality.”²¹ In Karatani’s writing, this “something positive” has numerous names, which include “a possible communism,” “metaphysics called communism,” “associationism,” and a “world republic” among others. The “world republic” is originally a Kantian idea, appearing in *Perpetual Peace*; in this republic, perpetual peace is attained, which marks the end of all hostilities.²² Karatani’s project after 1989 has been to reconceive this ideal.

It might appear strange, however, to insist on a world republic when the cold war had just ended and the world was seemingly united under the hegemony of the United States with its globalized market. It is true that the United States's hegemony unified the market globally, but the emergence of the world market does not mean the end of all hostilities at all. On the contrary, through the globalization of the market, disparity in wealth has intensified; in addition to the market, class struggle has also been globalized.²³ In fact, since the end of the cold war, regional conflicts have occurred more frequently while the "war on terror" literally globalized the battlefield. The demise of the Soviet Union along with China's conversion to the market economy mark the global dominance of capitalism, in which the market is supposed to be left working by itself without the intervention of the state, but, in Karatani's analysis, the situation is not that simple: even in a capitalist economy, the function of the state is indispensable because it is not at odds with capital but rather supports it. Moreover, the demand for the nation or what Benedict Anderson calls "imagined community" is higher than ever, as shown in rises of religious fundamentalism and nationalism in various regions. Karatani describes the relationship between capital, nation, and state in the age of the global economy as follows:

One often hears the prediction that, thanks to globalization of capital, the nation-state will disappear. It is certain that economic policies within nation-states do not work as effectively as before, because of the growing network of international economic reliance on foreign trade. But, no matter how international relations are reorganized and intensified, the state and nation won't disappear. When individual national economies are threatened by the global market (neoliberalism), they demand the protection (redistribution) of the state and/or bloc economy, at the same time as appealing to national cultural identity. So it is that any counteraction to capital must also be one targeted against the state and nation (community). The capitalist nation-state is fearless because of its trinity.²⁴

Capital does not work alone; it has the state and nation as its coworkers. What the age of globalization signifies is not a triumph of market economy over government control and nationalism but the completion of this trinity of capital-nation-state, knitted together like the Borromean knot (see Fig 1.4 on page 12 of this book). Since these three complement each other, a counteraction against one term of the trinity results in being absorbed into the other two. During the twentieth century, for example, there were two rather conspicuous endeavors to overcome capitalism: Leninism and fascism. Leninism tried to solve the disparity in wealth by suppressing the market through the state's control and planning, but,

inevitably causing aggrandizement of the state at the cost of civil liberties, its outcome was either reintroduction of a market economy (China) or a collapse of the state as such (the Soviet Union). Fascism's project was to counter both capital and the state with recourse to sentimental communality of the nation, but eventually it was transformed into state capitalism, which necessitated expansion of the market by imperialist foreign policy. In each case, the trinity was not shaken at all even though one part was seemingly weakened momentarily. The situation has remained the same in the twenty-first century. After the destruction of the World Trade Center in 2001, struggles against the state and capital are not bound together globally but often divided into individual nations, which is to say national peoples.²⁵ Karatani suggests, therefore, that "when we take capitalism into consideration, we always have to include nation and state."²⁶ Resistance to one part of the trinity has always taken the forms of the other two parts of the trinity; therefore, if we want our resistance to be effective, it must be directed at all three at the same time. It is only when the trinity itself is abolished that a world republic will come and perpetual peace be achieved.

Published in 2001 and translated into English in 2003, *Transcritique* was Karatani's first attempt to articulate that "something positive." Yet, to say "something positive" does not mean that Karatani has done away with critical and theoretical thinking or has presented an agenda for activity. In fact, the book is a theoretical investigation of the structure of the trinity, its parts, and its origin through the reading of Kant and Marx because, for Karatani, "to finally abolish the trinity, a deep scrutiny into (and critique of) [its parts] is required" rather than just denouncing the trinity.²⁷ In order to overcome the trinity, it is necessary first to comprehend what the three terms that constitute the trinity are, by setting the limit of each and seeing how they are related to each other. Otherwise, it would be impossible to think without one's critical thinking being incorporated into one of the parts. Only after "deep scrutiny" of the trinity in its entirety, would it be possible to think of what lies beyond. *Transcritique* could not complete its task, however. The book describes both the politico-economical dimension of Kant's critical philosophy and Marx's thinking on the condition of the possibility of—and the limit of—capital. Structures of state and nation are explored, but only in their relation to capital. Hence Karatani admits that the analysis of nation and state was "not fully developed" and remained among his "future projects."²⁸

This book, *Nation and Aesthetics*, is that future project actualized. As the title signifies, the main target of this volume is the nation. Even though some of the essays were written before *Transcritique*, as mentioned in Karatani's afterword, this volume is in a sense a sequel to

Transcritique—because all the essays are revised in accordance with his analysis of the trinity in *Transcritique*; in fact, Chapter 2 was originally subtitled “Transcritique II” when it was first published in a journal. Furthermore, after *Transcritique* and *Nation and Aesthetics*, Karatani wrote in 2010 *The Structure of World History*, in which he attempts a structural analysis of world history as a whole by applying his insight into the trinity. *Nation and Aesthetics* is, then, an indispensable link between *Transcritique* and *The Structure of World History*. Reading all these together, we can take a look at—or glimpse a parallax view of—the scenes opened up by Karatani’s thinking.

Karatani’s approach to the nation is not simple, however. It is neither an appreciation nor a denunciation of the nation. In Karatani’s analysis, indeed, the significance of the nation is double. On the one hand, the essence of the nation must be examined not as a counteraction to or the last asylum from the state and capital but rather as a link that binds the state and capital together; Karatani sees the nation as the last piece that completes the trinity. On the other hand, however, Karatani points out that, born out of popular discontent with the state and capital, the nation is a manifestation of the demand for equality by the people; for example, struggles against imperialism and colonialism usually take the form of nationalism. This is to say that nationalism cannot be explained away merely as an illusion. Even though nationalism is an illusion, it is a product of the people’s discontent with the reality of a situation. As long as the reality that causes the discontent exists, the illusion will always return in various forms. Rather than synthesizing these two perspectives or presenting a third inclusive one, Karatani attempts to articulate a transcritique or parallax view between these two standpoints.

Karatani’s dual, or transcritical stance to the nation is derived from his insight that the state, nation, and capital are all economic problems. Traditionally, Marxists tend to stress the division between super- and substructures, presupposing that the nation, the state, law, politics, religion, and culture belong not to the economic dimension but to the ideological one. It is instead of this division of the super- and substructures that Karatani proposes the trinity of capital-nation-state; the uniqueness of Karatani’s reading of Marx lies here. Among these three, capital is usually regarded as the only economic term because it is based on commodity exchange, but Karatani argues that the state and nation are also based on different kinds of exchanges; hence the state and nation are also economic problems. The mode of exchange dominant in the state is plundering and redistribution, while in the nation it is reciprocity. The three modes are all economic because they are all based on some mode of exchange. Karatani sees more significant roles in the nation and the state than other Marxists do. Because these two have relative autonomy, they cannot be abolished

merely by the struggle against capital. Karatani's project is to interrogate the three all together along with their relationship to each other.

The state, nation, and capital must be explained in economic terms: exchange. The nation is based on reciprocity, which is prevalent in such primitive societies as are described in Marcel Mauss's *The Gift*. Reciprocity consists of three obligations: to reciprocate presents received, to give presents, and to receive them.²⁹ Because these obligations demand that the members of the community give away and not accumulate the wealth, equality among them is strictly maintained, and concentration of power is avoided. In this community, thus, there is equality, but individual freedom is not appreciated as much as in the market economy. Still the fascination for equality is so strong that in modernity the community of reciprocity is imaginarily recovered in the semblance of nation. What is "imagined" in the formation of the nation is precisely the sense of reciprocity that was once openly exercised in primitive society. Karatani argues that it is because reciprocity has never been extinct that it can form the nation.

Plundering and redistribution are the mode of exchange dominant in the state. This mode can be found typically in the feudal state, but it exists in any form of the state, even though inconspicuously. In the modern state, taxation is a variation of this mode of exchange, which begins when one community plunders another. It might not appear to be an exchange but rather a unilateral taking. However, because the plundering community needs to continue plundering in order to support itself, the state must maintain and manage the conquered community by doing such things as protecting it from other communities or installing irrigation systems. This is the origin of the state, which redistributes wealth in order to plunder continuously.

Commodity exchange is based on mutual consent between free individuals. When individuals participate in this mode of exchange, they are not bound by community rule or forced by state violence. The city-state is the place in which this mode of exchange is dominant. In the city, especially in its market, its members can enjoy freedom, but they are not equal; for they use money as a means of exchange. Commodity exchange does not take place between commodities but is always mediated by money. Money can be accumulated, so that there are differences in wealth among people; in addition, money functions as a right to exchange everything, including the labor of others. By using money one can buy—or, indeed, exploit—another person's labor as a tool without threat of violence. As a result, there emerges not only inequality in wealth but also the hierarchical relationship of the ruler and the ruled, or capitalists and proletariats, and hence the class struggle.

The exchanges of reciprocity, plundering-redistribution, and commodity thus correspond to the nation, state, and capital respectively. Since Marx's *Capital* focuses exclusively on commodity exchange and capital, traditional Marxists tend not to take the other modes of exchange into consideration. Karatani argues, however, that Marx did not ignore the other two modes but, as it were, bracketed them, primarily in order to concentrate on the structure and mechanism of capital. The analyses of the state and nation, which are based on other modes of exchange, have been left as future tasks for generations after Marx. It is precisely these tasks which Karatani takes up in *Nation and Aesthetics*.

These three modes of exchange underlie the trinity of capital-nation-state. Yet there is also a fourth mode of exchange, which is absent in the Borromean knot but occupies the place of X in the diagram on page 2 of this volume.³⁰ It is precisely this X that leads to the world republic. Karatani describes this exchange mode X as the recovery of reciprocity at a higher level. Although it demands equality, however, it does not have to adhere to the rules and restrictions of primitive society. Hence the X might appear similar to commodity exchange, in which individuals are free from the rules and customs of community in their trade. However, the X is radically different from the free market because there is no exploitation of the other, which is prevented by equality among the members of this mode. The exchange mode X is capable of overcoming the other three modes, and when it actually does, the trinity of capital-nation-state will be abolished. When this X forms the world republic, there will be no inequality or oppression. It is a utopian idea, and indeed, Karatani suggests, revolutions always begin with utopian groups, such as the Levellers and Diggers in the Puritan revolution and the sans-culottes in the French revolution, whose principle of association cannot be explained in terms of either reciprocity, plundering-redistribution, or commodity exchange. They aimed at building communities which had previously not existed because their movements were based on the exchange mode X, although they did not last long and failed in their attempts. The mode X has no duration; it manifests itself only punctually, in the form of a point. The X occurs at the beginning of revolutions because it is a demand for a change of reality caused by the state and capital, but it tends to end in being reduced to an actual entity, just as the French Revolution ended up in the formation of the French nation.

The nation must be materially criticized in economic terms first of all because it is not a superstructure at all but has reciprocity as its own substructure. At the same time, however, the nation cannot be explained away merely as an illusion because its economic substructure, reciprocity, is not unrelated to the exchange mode X. Karatani describes this X as a recovery of reciprocity at a higher level. Resurfacing in modernity, reciprocity results

in nationalism and the nation, which consolidate the trinity, but potentially reciprocity can also be recovered as the exchange mode X. That is why critique of the nation is crucial for Karatani. In order to abolish the nation and to see the condition of possibility for the world republic, a deep consideration as to what the nation is and how it is formed is necessary.

Yet, as shown by Karatani's reluctance to specify a name for this exchange, the X must not be regarded as an actual activity or movement or a principle that we can put into practice here and now. Karatani warns that a community founded on the principle of the exchange mode X has never been brought into being in human history. It is first and foremost a utopian idea. Borrowing from Kant, Karatani calls it a "regulative idea," which can never be an object of experience but forever remains an end of all human effort. According to Kant, God, immortality of the soul, and freedom are among these ideas, but freedom is most important because the other two can be inferred from freedom. As Karatani devotes half of *Transcritique* to Kant and that book is a building block for the present volume, a look into this Kantian idea here will help us understand Karatani's overall project better.

In Kant's critical philosophy, freedom is defined as a cause that is independent from the series of events preceding it, while all phenomena in nature are determined by causality. Freedom is the power to begin a new series of events. At the same time, however, because it does not follow the causality of nature, freedom is inscrutable; human knowledge is concerned only with natural phenomena that accord with the laws of nature, but freedom is literally free from these laws. Our knowledge cannot explain freedom, but, more importantly, it is precisely this freedom that grounds the moral law, which demands our moral action: an action has morality when the decision for it is determined regardless of the agent's physical, psychological, and social—including economic—inclinations such as self-love or self-preservation, which follow the laws of nature. The moral law intervenes when one sees the other, not as a means, but as an end. Since with their physical and natural existence, however, human beings are divided between nature and freedom—that is, they are both finite and rational—it is impossible for them to fulfill the demand of the moral law completely. Freedom must remain a regulative idea, although it compels us to make efforts to approach the goal. Therefore Kant insists on the gap between nature and freedom because for him freedom should not be an object of sensibility, which completely follows the laws of nature.

The nation and nationalism appear precisely when, against Kant's warning, this regulative idea is objectified, or, in other words, freedom is misrecognized for a phenomenon in nature. Karatani points out that the emergence of German idealism and romanticism after Kant corresponds

simultaneously to the rise of nationalism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That is, while Kant insists on the unbridgeable gap between reason and sensibility, freedom and nature, or morality and human inclinations, the idealists and romantics substantialized the synthesis of the two. The regulative idea was then “aestheticized” or became an object of sensibility, being materialized into the form of nation. For the idealists, the nation is a realization of the idea; it is morality aestheticized, freedom sensibitized, or an idea objectified. Taking place when the ideal is taken to be real, nationalism is what Kant calls a transcendental illusion, a fantasy of transcendence and overcoming of reality.

The essays on aesthetics and linguistics in this volume must be read in this context: the sensibitization—aestheticization—of the (impossible) idea can be found in Okakura Kakuzō’s museum project (“History as Museum”), his art theory (“The Utility of Aesthetics”), Tokieda Motoki’s theory of language (“Nation-State and Linguistics”), and *the Japanese-like* as investigated by Maruyama Masao, Motoori Norinaga, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, and Alexandre Kojève (“Geopolitics of the Character”). These theories and concepts are closely tied with nationalism, and on their basis, there is the notion of disinterestedness or total indifference to historical, political, and economical conditions, or to morality and subjectivity. This notion might appear to be actualization of the Kantian idea of freedom, which is supposed to be independent from any kind of interest, inclination, or determination, but it is in fact historically and geographically conditioned, as Karatani points out. Moreover, although it is in order to criticize Japan’s myopic nationalism that Okakura and Tokieda used this notion—“bracketed” Japan’s particularity—their thought ends up as a theoretical ground for a bigger version of nationalism, that is, imperialism or the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, because “Japan” or “Japanese” without its particularity was no longer limited by the actual boundaries of Japan. As long as it is based on the sensibitization of the idea, aesthetics (and linguistics) cannot be separated from nationalism.

The idea (of freedom) is by definition inscrutable and inaccessible in terms of empirical knowledge because it belongs to the “beyond” of phenomena in nature. The idea of the exchange mode X must be respected but must not be taken for an object. It must be kept only as an ideal, never a real entity. Karatani argues that Kant’s later works are about cosmopolitanism and poised against nationalism, against this transcendental illusion called nation.

Yet, if the exchange mode X is an ideal, just as is Kant’s idea of freedom, how can we relate it to our existence? Or how can it have an effect on us if it is not merely a fiction? The initial question can be further complicated: if the mode X can never be objectified, how is a world republic possible? To

answer these questions, in chapter 2 of this book Karatani refers to Kant's notion of "unsocial sociability," which, programmed as human nature, can bring about the world republic or at least set the motion of history toward a world republic. In fact, according to Karatani, the League of Nations and the United Nations, along with Japan's Article Nine of its constitution (for-saking the sovereign right of war), bear witness to interventions, if never the full realization, of this strange sociability, which Karatani closely links to the exchange mode X. Hence, if we look closely at this unsocial sociability, we can have a sense of what the X resembles and what it does not.

As its name implies, the unsocial sociability has a double significance: on the one hand, it is the "tendency [of human beings] to enter society," but also a "thoroughgoing resistance that constantly threatens to sunder this society." Just as reciprocity demands equality, this unsocial sociability has its demands, but they are double; to enter the society and at the same time separate from it. Kant explains it as follows:

Man has a propensity for living in society, for in that state he feels himself to be more than man, i.e., feels himself to be more than the development of his natural capacities. He also has, however, a great tendency to isolate himself, for he finds in himself the unsociable characteristic of wanting everything to go according to his own desires, and he therefore anticipates resistance everywhere, just as he knows about himself that for his part he tends to resist others.

Because of its contradictory character, the unsocial sociability might sound destructive, but interestingly Kant regards this mode of sociability as the "cause" of "development of all of man's capacities" and "law-governed order in society."

Now this resistance awakens all of men's powers, brings him to overcome his tendency towards laziness, and, driven by his desire for honor, power, or property, to secure status among his fellows, whom he neither suffers, nor withdraws from. In this way, the first true steps from barbarism to culture, in which the unique social worth of man consists, now occur, all man's talents are gradually developed, his taste is cultured, and through progressive enlightenment he begins to establish a way of thinking that can in time transform the crude natural capacity for moral discrimination into definite practical principles and thus transform a pathologically enforced agreement into a society and, finally, into a moral whole.³¹

Unsocial sociability keeps man busy; it is a drive for something beyond one's natural capacity and eventually brings about a world republic. However, the

“moral whole,” which is the end of this development, can never be achieved by a human being, who is not only rational but also finite. It is only an infinite being, such as God, who can achieve the moral perfection, in which the moral law has no resistance from physical and social inclinations (in fact, Kant calls moral perfection holiness). As a finite being, the unsocial sociable man lives in human society, but as a rational being, seeking moral perfection, which is in principle possible only beyond the human sphere, he attempts to achieve total isolation.

In the “First Introduction” to *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, this disturbing and seemingly futile human nature is called an “empty wish”: “a person may desire something in the most lively and persistent way even though he is convinced that he cannot accomplish it or even that it is absolutely impossible.” Here Kant warns against such empty wishing because it weakens the mind “by exhausting its powers,” which are “repeatedly strained by representations in order to make their object real, but just as often let the mind sink back into consciousness of its incapacity.” Still Kant admits that this empty wish is a disposition that “nature has implanted in us.” In fact it is even nature’s wise “arrangement,” which has “combined the determination of our power with the representation of the object even prior to knowledge of our capacity, which is often first brought forth precisely by this striving, which initially seemed to the mind itself to be an empty wish.”³² This empty wish for the impossible makes human beings uncomfortable with themselves. It consumes their powers, but it is exactly thanks to this empty wish that human beings can always take one step closer to moral perfection, though at the risk of losing sociability.

In the other part of the third *Critique*, Kant describes this wish for isolation as the sublime. Kant first points out that aesthetic judgments of the beautiful and the sublime are marked by their “universal communicability,” by which they can be communicated in society and acquire an interest in it. “Nevertheless,” he adds, “the separation from all society is also regarded as something sublime if it rests on ideas that look beyond all sensible interest. To be self-sufficient, hence not to need society, yet without being unsociable, i.e., fleeing it, is something that comes close to the sublime, just like any superiority over needs.”³³ The unsocial sociability is sublime because, as a network of needs, human society in fact resists moral perfection, which as pure freedom, requires one to overcome every kind of such needs.

In his attempt to explain the unsocial sociability as the cause of the world republic in the chapter “Transcritique on Kant and Freud,” Karatani links that human nature to Freud’s notion of the superego and then points out the similarity of its structure to that of the Kantian sublime. The sublime is the key for thinking about unsocial sociability and, therefore, the exchange mode X. If the X is working, it causes a feeling of the sublime in us. A world

republic can be caused by something sublime in human nature. Generally, the Kantian sublime is considered a dialectic apparatus, in which the experience of negativity is appropriated for the development of the self, but for Karatani, the sublime is more like the superego: it comes from within the self, but at the same time it works at odds with that self, as it is fundamentally a displeasure, like the death drive, turned toward the self. It is neither subjectivity nor coercion from the outside. It is radically an other in that it can never be known whether it is from the inside or outside. For Karatani, above all, the experience of the sublime is an intervention of reason or more or less a momentary manifestation of freedom. It is the sublime (and the superego) that drives people toward perpetual peace and hence toward the world republic. It is also the demand for perpetual peace against nationalisms, trying to overcome the feelings for national communities, which indeed cause wars.

Karatani's thinking about the sublime becomes clearer in comparison to Paul de Man's reading of Kant. Karatani was personally acquainted with de Man when the two taught at Yale during the 1970s. According to Karatani, one day they talked about de Man's uncle, Henri de Man, and de Man himself mentioned that his uncle, though a socialist, was accused of collaboration with the Nazis occupation. It is at this time, Karatani says, that he could guess why de Man left Belgium for the United States *after* the war. Four days before de Man's death, Karatani talked with him on the phone. Karatani asked de Man for an interview about Nazism in Belgium under the occupation. Since de Man did not expect his own death in four days, he promised to have the interview with Karatani in January 1984, though he died at the end of 1983 and the promised interview was forever left as an agreement without fruition. De Man is very often criticized for being indifferent to politics and ethics, but Karatani feels the opposite: at the ground of de Man's passion for radical formalization of every authoritative idea underlies a certain kind of political, ethical insight. That is, as Karatani comments, de Man's persistent insistence that language betrays us as long as we are human points to an ethical problem that inevitably conditions human beings, rather than being merely an intellectual thesis.³⁴ Paul de Man's *Aesthetic Ideology* was translated into Japanese and serialized between 1997 and 1999 in *Hiyō Kūkan* [*Critical Space*], the journal for which Karatani was the chief editor. In this work, what de Man calls "aesthetic ideology" is described as a product of the romantic period born from the appropriation—or aestheticization—of Kant's ideas of sensibility. Karatani's thinking on the nation and nationalism in relation to aesthetics can be seen as a political and historical application of this insight. Accordingly, de Man's thinking on the Kantian sublime would surely help us have a sense of Karatani's exchange mode X.

De Man's reading of the Kantian sublime focuses on the "deep, perhaps fatal, break or discontinuity" at the center of *Critique of the Power of Judgment*.³⁵ This break is not merely a contradiction, but it is caused precisely by "the critical power of a transcendental philosophy," of which "the very strength and consistency" "undoes the very project of such a philosophy."³⁶ This break manifests itself, according to de Man, in the "General remark" at the end of the analytic of the sublime, which indeed occupies the point between the mathematical and dynamic sublimes. In this section, Kant refers as examples of the sublime to the following scenes.

If, then, we call the sight of the starry heaven *sublime*, we must not place at the foundation of judgment concepts of worlds inhabited by rational beings and regard the bright points, with which we see the space above us filled, as their suns moving in circles purposively fixed with reference to them; but we must regard it, just as we see it [*wie man ihn sieht*], as a distant, all-embracing vault [*ein weites Gewölbe*]. Only under such a representation can we range that sublimity that a pure aesthetic judgment ascribes to this object. And in the same way, if we are to call the sight of the ocean sublime, we must not think of it as we ordinarily do, as implying all kinds of knowledge (that are not contained in immediate intuition). For example, we sometimes think of the ocean as a vast kingdom of aquatic creatures, or as the great source of those vapors that fill the air with clouds for the benefit of the land, or again as an element that, though dividing continents from each other, yet promotes the greatest communication between them; all these produce merely teleological judgments. To find the ocean nevertheless sublime we must regard it as poets do [*wie die Dichter es tun*], merely by what the eye reveals [*was der Augenschein zeigt*]³⁷—if it is at rest, as a clear mirror of water only bounded by the heavens; if it is stormy, as an abyss threatening to overwhelm everything.³⁷

For de Man, the Kantian sublime is a problem of vision. Since for Kant aesthetic judgment is non-teleological, a vision of the sublime is that which is "completely detached from any purpose or interest that the mind may find in them." To illustrate this vision, de Man refers to Kant's example in *Logic* of "a wild man who, from a distance, sees a house of which he does not know the use." The house is the same as another sees, who knows its use and purpose, but while for the wild man the house is "mere intuition, for the other both intuition and concept."³⁸ It is this vision that is taking place in front of the starry heavens and the ocean. De Man later calls this vision a "material vision" or "stony gaze" with admission that there is no appropriate name for it.³⁹

Earlier in the third *Critique*, Kant explains the feeling of the sublime as experience of “our own limitation in the immeasurability of nature” or “insufficiency of our capacity to adopt a standard proportionate to the aesthetic estimation of the magnitude of its domain,” which is supposed to be compensated in turn with discoveries of “another, nonsensible standard, which has that very infinity under itself as a unit against which everything in nature is small” and of “a superiority over nature itself even in its immeasurability.”⁴⁰ In this structure of sublimity, displeasure of limitation and incapacity is exchanged for pleasure of another standard and superiority; de Man points out that, since, “in the experience of the sublime, the imagination achieves tranquility, it submits to reason, achieves the highest degree of freedom by freely sacrificing its natural freedom to the higher freedom of reason.”⁴¹ The sublime in the “General remark” is different from this kind of sublimity; it is in fact a “break” in Kant’s thinking on the sublime. The sublime that de Man calls the “stony gaze” is completely indifferent to exchange. Without exchange between signifiers, it is the point at which referential movement stops functioning. The “stony gaze” is, however, not destruction of an order but more like a ground; it is “a priori, previous to any understanding, to any exchange or anthropomorphism which will allow Wordsworth to address, in book 5 of *The Prelude*, the ‘speaking face’ of nature.”⁴²

Neither is the vision a sensation, a primary or secondary understanding in Locke’s sense: the eye, left to itself, entirely ignores understanding; it only notices appearance (it is *Augenschein*) without any awareness of a dichotomy between illusion and reality—a dichotomy which belongs to teleological and not to aesthetic judgment. In other words, the transformation of nature into a building, the transformation of sky and ocean into vault and floor, is not a trope. The passage is entirely devoid of any substitutive exchange, of any negotiated economy, between nature and mind⁴³

De Man calls the sublimity that Kant explains before the “general remark” a “story of an exchange, of a negotiation in which powers are lost and gained in an economy of sacrifice and recuperation.”⁴⁴ There is, on the other hand, no exchange taking place in the de Manian sublime.

Now returning to Karatani’s description of the cause of a world republic, we find the exchange mode X takes the forms of “unsocial sociability” or “superego”; and it is also sublime. According to de Man, however, the sublime in its most radical sense is devoid of exchange. When we have the feeling of the sublime, something beyond—or independent from—exchange is taking place: the sublime is unexchangeable.

Karatani described the exchange mode X as a recovery of reciprocity at a higher level. And Karatani strictly limits reciprocity to exchange in distinction from pure gift. Here Karatani follows Mauss's anthropology in *The Gift*. While in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* Malinowski suggested the existence of a pure gift, which does not require reciprocation but is "freely given"—that is, spontaneously given regardless of the return of interest to the giver—Mauss denied any such kind of gift and concentrates his study solely on exchange in which a present is always reciprocated.⁴⁵ For Mauss, pure gift is as inscrutable as the Kantian idea of freedom: when there is a gift, it is always reciprocated at a certain level. If one receives a gift, it has to be reciprocated; it is structurally impossible to receive it and leave it unreciprocated without feeling the sense of debt or guilt. That is, even if the receiver of the gift does not exchange things, another kind of exchange occurs—the exchange between the material gift and the psychological debt. That is why Mauss refers to the "double meaning of the word Gift in all these [Germanic] languages—on the one hand, a gift, on the other, poison."⁴⁶ When the material exchange does not take place, there is an exchange at a psychological level. Once gift-giving happens, the ensuing exchange cannot be stopped. There is no one-way gift-giving. A gift without reciprocation is impossible.

Yet, even though it is a recovery, the mode X is not reciprocity as such. They are as different from each other as a nation and a world republic are. I suggest here reading the X as the Kantian transcendental ideal or pure gift. Like the de Manian sublime, as a cause of a world republic, the mode X is independent from exchange. Rather, as de Man's "stony gaze" does, it marks a breakdown of all exchanges, which have been imagined to take place, for example, between the state and capital in the semblance of the nation. The X as pure gift is thus destructive to the trinity. It should be noted, however, that Karatani has pointed out that any community based on the X has never existed and that social movements beginning with the X lasted only momentarily. Or as Mauss suggests, there is no such thing as pure gift in reality. Pure gift never exists as such; it is always transformed into exchange. In consonance with Kant's idea of freedom, Karatani therefore maintains, the X always remains ideal; if it is aestheticized—or sensibitized—it would be exchanged and result in forming or upholding the status quo of a nation.

As Karatani himself persists in calling it exchange, however, the X as pure gift is not unrelated to exchange. Rather it is the condition of the possibility of exchange as well as that of its impossibility. In "The Empire and the Nation" Karatani points out that "in commodity exchange there is something precarious, which can never be sublated"; and money is introduced precisely in order to prevent the disaster caused

by this precariousness. Since nothing can guarantee a commodity to be exchanged for another, people try to store the right for exchange, that is, money. Capitalism is “a system of credit or faith that is formed to avoid the difficulties of exchange—almost like a religious world.”⁴⁷ Money is a defense against the foreseeable failure of exchange. Put differently, people save money in order to avoid a pure gift, in which one not only gives without expectation of reciprocation but also incurs unrepayable debt. This precariousness in commodity exchange can be applied to the other two modes of exchange; the state recompenses its plundering by redistribution because, if it does not, the plundered community either extinguishes or destroys the plundering state in uprising; the sense of debt or guilt, which emerges when one receives a gift, is the symptom of the fear of the failure of exchange. Crises of exchange are thus essential to exchange as such. Without the possibility of its failure—without the possibility of the total loss of relationship—there would be no such thing as exchange. As the crisis of exchange, pure gift is the condition of the possibility of exchange as such. If there is exchange, there is always possibility of its failure, pure gift. Pure gift cannot be separated from exchange.

Hiroki Yoshikuni

PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION (2015)

Although they were collected and published in book form in Japan in 2004, these essays, except for the first chapter, were written during the first half of the 1990s. In that period, I was reconsidering Kant for a number of reasons. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, the Hegelian concept of “the end of history” became dominant while the ideality of history was dismissed. By rereading Kant, I attempted to overcome this trend. This attempt took the form of reading Kant through Marx and at the same time Marx through Kant. I named it “transcritique.”

In this process of transcritique, I conceived the idea of analyzing the economic substructure in terms of exchange modes rather than production modes. A social formation exists as a juncture of different exchange modes: a juncture of exchange mode A (reciprocity), B (plundering and redistribution), and C (commodity exchange). This juncture changes its arrangement according to the most dominant exchange mode in the process of history. When mode C (commodity exchange) is dominant, for example, the juncture of A, B, and C emerges in the form of capital-nation-state.

This is not always the case, however. Even today there are societies which do not take the form of capital-nation-state. It is in eighteenth-century Britain that the capital-nation-state juncture appeared for the first time. Hegel quickly comprehended and conceptualized this in his *Philosophy of Right*: he grasped the juncture of civil society (market economy), the state, and the nation, which did not exist in Germany at that time, as a dialectic system. Marx began with the critique of *Philosophy of Right*, its ideality in particular, and regarded civil society (capitalist economy) as substructure and the state and the nation as ideal superstructure determined by

the substructure. In Marx's critique, however, Hegel's viewpoint that saw a social formation as a juncture of capital, the state, and the nation was lost.

Consequently, Marxists tend to undervalue the state and nation. They assumed that the state and the nation would disappear when the economic substructure was replaced. Yet, as a result, Marxists movements always stumbled on the state and the nation, ultimately ending up in the collapse of the Soviet bloc. It is at this point that the discourse of "the end of history" prevailed. It told us that the capital-nation-state is the final formation, and that there would be no radical revolution despite minor changes. Ideals such as sublation of nation and state were considered merely "grand narratives."

I reject this discourse except for one point: Marxism began with critique of Hegel but ultimately failed in overcoming Hegel. This does not mean a corroboration of Hegel's philosophy. Critique of Hegel as Marx did remains necessary, but in a different way. That is, when the history of social formation is materialistically analyzed in terms of economic substructure, this structure should be conceived not in terms of the mode of production but in terms of the mode of exchange.

Many Marxists, who stumbled on the problem of state and nation, started emphasizing superstructure's "relative autonomy," but in fact such attempt resulted in forgetting the economic substructure. I, on the other hand, tried to comprehend social formation by keeping the economic substructure as its basis, but the structure had to be analyzed not in terms of production modes but exchange modes. I established the theory of exchange modes in *Transcritique*, which was published in 2001. Since this theory did not exist in the first half of the 1990s when I wrote the essays collected here, I explained it in "The Empire and the Nation" when this volume was published in 2004. Yet, in a sense, the viewpoint of exchange modes developed while I was writing the essays of this volume: the exchange modes are concerned with "nation and aesthetics."

In the 1980s, Benedict Anderson's notion that the nation was an "imagined community" was popular. This is merely an extension of a kind of theory that sees the nation as ideal superstructure. Moreover, in the early 1990s, there was a view that the nation would lose its meaning in the global development of capitalism. This view is also based on the notion that changes in economic substructure would abolish such superstructure as the nation. I, on the contrary, held that the nation would not disappear easily. For the nation exists not independently but only as a juncture of capital-nation-state. The capital-nation-state is produced in the old world empires' dissolution and segmentation. If the nation is no longer functional, therefore, it will be replaced by a state that covers a wider area or by religious fundamentalism. In short, the nation is not merely a product of

imagination or representation but fundamentally based on economic sub-structure (exchange modes).

But how is this *juncture* of different exchange modes formed? Kant helped me answer this question. He argues that imagination mediates sensibility and understanding (theoretical reason). Imagination had been considered merely one of the minor faculties, but after Kant it was given new importance. After Kant, aesthetics shifted its meaning from a study of sensible perception to that of art. It should be noted here that the importance of imagination was emphasized at the same time as the idea of nation was established. In this sense, “nation and aesthetics” are inseparable. The nation cannot be a mere “imagined community.” It occupies the position of “imagination” that joins capital and the state together. The Borromean knot of capital-nation-state, is, as it were, based on “nation and aesthetics.”

In addition to these issues, there were other issues that arose in Japan in the early 1990s and compelled me to reconsider Kant. They were Japanese issues, but I hold they are universally significant. A brief explanation should be necessary here. The Gulf War broke out in 1991. This was an incident that symbolized the end of the Cold War regime, and that was epoch-making for Japan because the government decided to send troops abroad for the first time since the Second World War. Article Nine of the Constitution of Japan states the following:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.

In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.

Whoever reads this article would believe that it is impossible for Japan to have an army. In reality, however, Japan has an enormous army. It is “self-defense” forces, which are not interpreted as an army or “armed forces”; inside Japan, therefore, it is believed that there is no army in Japan. There are many Japanese people who suggest amending the constitution in conformity with the current situation rather than playing with such self-deceptive sophistry. But such amendment is impossible. It is obvious that the people would oppose any change to Article Nine. Those parties and politicians who usually insist on amendment of the constitution keep silent about it during elections. They know they will be defeated utterly if the constitution becomes an issue. All they can do is to change the *interpretation* of the article.

The conservatives in Japan have been saying that this constitution was imposed on Japan by the United States, which occupied the former after the Second World War. They are correct; clearly the Japanese did not create the constitution voluntarily. It should be noted, however, that even though Article Nine was drafted by the occupation army, it is not exclusively US interests that made the article possible. The idealism of the New Deal that survived the Second World War is reflected in it. Japan's Article Nine presupposes the existence of the United Nations, which is based on the New Dealers' Kantian ideal.

Such ideal disappeared, however, as the tension between the United States and the Soviet Union intensified. When there was a revolution in China and a war in Korea, the United States demanded that Japan, which was under occupation by the Allies, change its constitution, but the conservative government of Japan refused the United States's demand. It was obvious for those in the government that they could not win an election if they changed the constitution. Instead they created the "Self-Defense Force" by changing the *interpretation* of the constitution. In this sense, it is possible to say that Article Nine was not imposed by the United States, but was chosen and has been chosen by the Japanese.

But it is not necessarily the case that the Japanese keep Article Nine because of their serious reflection on Japan's invasion of Asia. The support for Article Nine does not come from such conscious reflection or judgment. If it did, political manipulations could change it. Article Nine has been supported persistently and even absurdly, but it is neither because it is imposed from the outside nor because it is chosen voluntarily through reflection. But then where does it come from?

Then I started thinking about Freud's question of the superego. The superego is often regarded as an internalization of social norms, but Freud proposed the concept of the superego after the First World War, that is, after the idea of the death drive had been established in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." He developed the concept of superego through war neurosis he treated after the war, not during the war. Unlike the unconscious "censor," which is based on parents or social norms, the superego is formed when the outward death drive turns inward. In that sense, the superego comes not from the outside but from the inside. On this issue Freud writes:

The situation is usually presented as though ethical requirements were the primary thing and the renunciation of instinct followed from them. This leaves the origin of the ethical sense unexplained. Actually it seems to be the other way about. The first renunciation of the drive is enforced by external powers, and it is only this which creates the ethical sense, expresses itself in conscience and demands a further renunciation of the drive.⁴⁸

This idea explains well why Article Nine took deep root in Japan despite its imposition by the United States. That is, the renunciation of war had been first forced by external powers, and then it created conscience, which demands a further renunciation of war.

The superego not only conforms the ego to social norms but also has the positive function of encouraging the ego and controlling aggressivity. This new perspective exceeds the range of psychiatry: it is possible to say that, from the viewpoint of the superego, Freud tried to evaluate positively the postwar Weimar regime, which was attacked not only by the right but also by the left as sickness imposed from the *outside*. Freud thought that it is not necessary to recover from this sickness. An individual needs to recover from sickness, but a group does not. I had a similar thought concerning Article Nine of postwar Japan. Japanese conservatives have been saying that, as a state, Japan is sick because of Article Nine. But there is no need to cure this sickness; it is the first step toward the “withering away of the state.” Therefore this sickness should be spread all over the world.

At this point, I found Kant’s idea of “perpetual peace” at the basis of Japan’s Article Nine and the United Nations. Although Kant has always been laughed at as an optimistic idealist, he never assumed that human goodwill could realize perpetual peace. In his words, perpetual peace could be realized by humanity’s (human nature’s) “unsocial sociability,” or put in Freud’s words the “aggressive drive.” Freud and Kant are thus linked in my thinking. Earlier, the project of reading Kant through Marx and Marx through Kant was called *transcritique*. In this volume I read Kant through Freud and Freud through Kant. One of the essays is therefore titled “*Transcritique on Kant and Freud*.”

Although the Russian Revolution is often referred to as the world-historical event after the First World War, I would like to name the League of Nations, too, as one such event. While the former was based on the Marxist ideal and the latter on the Kantian ideal of the republic of states, it is foolish to ask which is more important. Without a social revolution in each state, the republic could not be more than an alliance of states; without the republic of states, the social revolutions would be divided into states, isolated from one another, and transformed into a distorted form. What is necessary now is to link these two ideals.

Kojin Karatani

NOTE ON THE TEXT

The original Japanese text of *Nation and Aesthetics* was published by Iwanami Shoten in 2004 as the fourth volume of *Teihon Karatani Kōjin shū* (*The Standard Edition of the Works of Kojin Karatani*). Since it is a collection of essays, earlier versions appeared in journals and magazines. “Empire and Nation: An Introduction” first appeared in the March 2004 issue of *Bungakukai* (*The Literary World*) and changed its title to “Introduction: Nation and Aesthetics” when included in the *Teihon*. “Transcritique on Kant and Freud” was first published in the November 2003 issue of *Bungakukai* under the title of “Kant and Freud: Transcritique II,” which was changed to “Death and Nationalism: Kant and Freud” in the *Teihon*. “History as Museum: Okakura Kakuzō and Ernest Fenollosa” originally appeared in *Hihyō-kūkan* (*Critical Space*) II-1 in 1994 under the title of “Japan as Museum: Okakura Kakuzō and Ernest Fenollosa,” and its revised version with the current title was included in *Sōzō sareta koten* (*Created Classics* [Haruo Shirane and Tomi Suzuki eds., Tokyo: Shinyo-sha, 1999]). “The Utility of Aesthetics—After *Orientalism*” was published in *Hihyō-kūkan* II-14 in 1997. “Nation-State and Linguistics” first appeared in Karatani’s *Hyūmoa toshite no yuibutsuron* (*Materialism as Humor*) in 1993 under the title of “Écriture and Nationalism,” and its revised version with the current title was published in *Hihyō-kūkan* II-23 in 1999. “Geopolitics of the Character: Japan-Psycho-Analysis” was first published in *Hihyō-kūkan* III-3 in 2003 under the title of “‘Reconsidering’ Japan-Psycho-Analysis.”

There are English translations based on these earlier versions. “Transcritique on Kant and Freud” was translated by Hiroki Yoshikuni and published in *Umbr(a) Semblance* (Buffalo: Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Culture, 2007) under the title of “World Intercourse: a

Transcritical Reading of Kant and Freud.” Sabu Kohso’s translations of “Japan as Museum: Okakura Tenshin and Ernest Fenollosa” and “Uses of Aesthetics: After *Orientalism*” appeared in *Japanese Art After 1945: Scream Against the Sky* (ed. Alexandra Munroe [New York: Abrams, 1994]) and in *Boundary 2* (1998 Summer, 145–60) respectively. “Nationalism and Ecriture” was translated by Indra Levy in *Surfaces* (V. 201, 1995).

All the essays were revised by Karatani himself for this English edition; two of them changed titles. Hiroki Yoshikuni translated “Empire and Nation,” “Transcritique on Kant and Freud,” “Nation-State and Linguistics,” and “Geopolitics of the Character”; Darwin Tsen, “History as Museum”; Jonathan E. Abel, “The Utility of Aesthetics.”

All notes are from Karatani’s work unless otherwise noted with [Translator’s Note]. Name order is consistent with how authors have been published in English. Thus we use Kojin Karatani rather than Karatani Kōjin.

Hiroki Yoshikuni

1

EMPIRE AND NATION

An Introduction

1. CAPITAL-NATION-STATE

1.1 Types of Exchange

The state and the nation are generally considered to be located in the political, cultural, or ideological dimension, a dimension that is not economic. I argue, however, that they should be addressed as economic issues in a broad sense. That is, we should grasp the root of the state and the nation in a different type of exchange from that of commodity exchange. My view differs from the common understanding of Marxism, which maintains that superstructures—such as the state or the nation—retain relative autonomy and are situated over economic substructures (bases), even though determined by them. This Marxist understanding was formed under industrial capitalism: it was conceived when the commodity exchange economy became overwhelmingly prevalent. There are various types of exchange, but in the economy of industrial capitalism only commodity exchange is considered *economic* while the other types of exchange are political or cultural.

As long as they are not considered economic, the state and the nation will be kept mystified: they will continue to appear as if they did not have the sort of material origin that the economy appears to have. Although they appeared outside the traditional scope of commodity exchange, they originated in other types of exchange. Roughly speaking, there are four types of exchange (Figs 1.1 and 1.2). Marx argues that commodity exchange began between communities and then, as a result, took place between individuals within each community. Naturally, however, there are *exchanges* in a broader sense within a community or a family: reciprocation of gift and

Plundering and Redistribution	Commodity Exchange
Reciprocity	X

Fig 1.1.

Feudal State	City
Community	X

Fig 1.2.

return. This idea of reciprocity, which has been emphasized by anthropologists since Marcel Mauss, cannot be limited to primitive society or community. A familiar example is the reciprocity between parents and their children. When parents take care of their children, it is a gift. Although there is uncertainty as to whether or not the children repay the favor of the gift, parents might think that they are rewarded merely through the existence of their children, or the children who do not repay the gift might have a sense of indebtedness. The relationship of reciprocity is not usually regarded as an exchange; in terms of the commodity exchange, in fact, reciprocity cannot be an equivalent exchange. For the parties concerned, however, it is an equivalent exchange.

This reciprocal or mutual exchange has been diluted by the prevalence of commodity exchange. Yet it should be noted, first, that this type of exchange will never disappear as long as there is the relationship between

parents and children. We were not born of our own will. That is to say, at the moment we were born, we received the gift of care from our parents, and we are obliged to repay the favor. It is not our choice. Precisely because it is not our choice, however, we cannot escape from the sense of indebtedness arising from the gift. Benedict Anderson writes, "Dying for one's country, which usually one does not choose, assumes a moral grandeur which dying for the Labour Party, the American Medical Association, or perhaps even Amnesty International cannot rival, for all those bodies one can join or leave at easy will."¹ As I shall explain later, this kind of sentiment indicates that the nation is fundamentally derived from reciprocal exchange.

Secondly, reciprocal exchange is indeed the basis for all the other types of exchange: even though a relationship might not appear to be an exchange, it should be seen as an exchange if it has taken the form of reciprocal exchange. For example, the precapitalist mode of exploitation, whether the mode of feudal or of Asiatic production, is not called an exchange.² It is clearly a system in which a ruling class plunders an agrarian community (a clan society). This exploitation can be called "extra-economic coercion" (Marx), meaning that it is different from commodity exchange. In order to exploit continuously, however, the ruler must redistribute the plundered wealth and play a public role in the community, attending to irrigation, technical innovation, and defense. In other words, in order to sustain the relationship between the ruler and the plundered, it must be represented as reciprocal exchange. Otherwise, the ruling power could not survive for long. Accordingly, it is possible to consider this plunder-redistribution relationship as a kind of *exchange*.³

An apparently exploitive system of rule can be maintained when understood as a kind of equivalent exchange. The rule over a community is at the same time a protection and benefit, which demands a return. The Romantics and anarchists, for example, conceived a community as a world of self-government and mutual aid. Bakunin, too, insisted that, since the self-governing, agrarian communities (*mir*) were still in existence in Russia, removal of the landlord class and the state apparatus would be sufficient.⁴ However, although reciprocal exchange in a community is indeed different from commodity exchange and plunder-redistribution by the state, competition and power are not absent in it. The reciprocal exchange is mandatory; if one does not perform the duty of this exchange, he or she will be placed in a socially inferior position. As shown by the example of potlatch, to give liberally is one of the measures to rule others. Therefore, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled can be created not only by violence, but also by liberality. If the former measure can be called power, the latter can be called authority, which inflicts the sense of unrepayable gift on the ruled.

Authority induces voluntary subjection. In distinction from power, Gramsci called this “hegemony,” whereas Althusser referred to it as “ideology.” At the bottom of this voluntary subjection, however, reciprocal exchange can be found. For instance, the agrarian community voluntarily subjects itself to the ruler. As a result, if there is an attempt to overthrow the ruling or state apparatus, ironically the attempt would encounter resistance not only from the ruler but also from the ruled community. We should understand, therefore, that at the foundation of continuing power there is not only violent coercion but also reciprocal exchange.

The fact that reciprocal exchange forms the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is not limited to primitive society. As shown by today’s parliamentary governments, the more liberally a politician gives, the more powerful he or she is. As a matter of course, he does not liberally distribute his own money but that of others, particular funds acquired through taxation. Nevertheless, the ruler’s redistribution of the plundered wealth would be represented as though it were a *gift*. Marx has pointed out the process in which Louis Bonaparte gained authority by liberally *giving* to all classes: “Bonaparte would like to appear as the patriarchal benefactor of all classes. But he cannot give to one class without taking from another.”⁵ Although they were in fact plundered, each class felt as if they were receiving a gift from Bonaparte. As a result, Bonaparte acceded to the throne from the presidency.

In order to investigate the modern state and nation fundamentally, we must trace them back to the mode of *exchange*. For example, the relationship of plunder and redistribution still exists in the modern state, but it has been transformed into the one between the liability of the people for taxes and their redistribution by politicians and bureaucrats. Communal reciprocity still exists in a different form: the nation—one form of Anderson’s “imagined community.” The nation has its basis in the sympathy for and indebtedness to the compatriots, which originate in reciprocal exchange. Of course, the principles of exchange do not explain everything about the nation and the state. Yet, without going back to these principles, our understanding of the nation and the state would remain superficial. The same can be said about capitalism: in order to grasp it, we need to go back to examine the simple exchange of commodities.

Classical economists such as Smith and Ricardo had already explored the system of world capitalism, but Marx began his thinking with the basic problem of commodity exchange. This regress is not historical but logical. The classical economists presupposed that commodity exchange was an equivalent exchange because they believed that labor value was intrinsic to each commodity. Marx, on the other hand, put this presupposition into question. What Marx found is the fact that in commodity exchange there

is something precarious, which can never be sublated. Exactly because of this precariousness, man tries to store money—the right for exchange: the original capitalist is the miser. The capitalist economy is fundamentally irrational even though it is “economically rational.” The capitalist drive is a perversion in which use value (consumption) is given up while the right for exchange is hoarded. Nor is the capitalist economy material or verifiable. It is a system of credit or faith that is formed to avoid the difficulties of exchange—almost like a religious world. In order to grasp the capitalist economy, therefore, we must begin with the “economic substructure,” namely the mode of commodity exchange.

Commodity exchange is based on mutual consent. Nonetheless it is not an equivalent exchange, for, if it were, accumulation of capital, which gains profit (surplus value) through exchange, would be impossible. At the same time, capital’s activity is essentially merchant capital. The classical economists held that merchant capital was based on an unequivocal exchange in which things bought cheap were sold dear, but it gains surplus value from the differences between exchanges in different value systems. In this way, when a given commodity is bought cheap and sold dear, both exchanges are *equivalent exchanges* in that each of them is based on its own domain’s value system. In this respect, there is no difference between merchant and industrial capital. Merchant capital gains surplus value from the spatial difference between value systems, whereas industrial capital does so by differentiating a system temporally through incessant innovations of technology. Under the guise of voluntary, equivalent exchange, industrial capital exploits surplus value and produces classes different from the feudal classes—capital and wage labor.

This capitalistic mode of exploitation does not need “extra-economic coercion,” but it needs “economic coercion,” as it were: there must be power to enforce execution of the contract. It was not until the advent of modern industrial capitalism, in which land and labor were commodified, that commodity exchange became dominant in society; before modernity, commodity exchange had been partial and local while the other two types of exchange had been overwhelmingly dominant. Commodity exchange takes place between communities or states, that is, in the market. Reciprocal exchange in a community has the power to enforce its own execution, the power of the community over individuals. According to anthropologists’ reports, power that forces the reciprocation of a gift is represented as a magical power such as *mana* or *hau*. On the other hand, there is no such magical power working in the exchange outside the community—the commodity exchange. It is the state that has the power to enforce the execution of a contract for exchange. That is, the *market* needs to be protected by the state. Then what protects the market that is placed between the states?

Situating itself above these states and communities, world empire guarantees exchange between the states by binding them in a tributary relationship. It guarantees the trade between communities and states. In this sense, the world empire was born in the formation of the *world economy*, however small it was. (Later, I will discuss the world economy system, which replaces the world empire.)⁶

1.2. *The Borromean Knot*

It is generally believed that the nation-state was formed as capitalism developed, and that by the same token it will decline as capitalism continues its development. This view, however, makes it impossible to understand not only capitalism but also the nation and the state. So long as they are studied separately, none of them can be grasped. In this respect, Wallerstein proposed a perspective that relates the state and capital to each other.

Traditionally Marxists tended to see the transition from premodern to modern society primarily as a change of economic substructure—from precapitalist to capitalist economy—which consequently caused transformations in the state, laws, and ideologies. Against this Marxist view, Wallerstein attempts not to separate economy from politics, or monetary economy from the state. According to his account, *the world empire* was the form of politico-economy in the premodern age, and it was replaced by *the world economy*—the modern world-system—in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. In spite of its name, the world empire did not cover the *world*. There were in fact numerous world empires. These *world empires* were transformed into a *world economy* when the theretofore separate blocs of economy were unified. Speaking specifically, when the economies of the Baltic and Mediterranean regions were internationally joined together in the fifteenth century, *the world market* was established.

Marx's *Capital* clearly presupposes this fact:

The circulation of commodities is the starting-point of capital. The production of commodities and their circulation in its developed form, namely trade, form the historic presupposition under which capital arises. World trade and the world market date from the sixteenth century, and from then on the modern history of capital starts to unfold.⁷

The Age of Discovery in the sixteenth century literally brought about a global market. Once established, no one could dwell outside of it. The

world empires still existed regionally, but they were already surrounded by *the world market*, being exposed to the further prevalence of the market economy (commodity exchange) and imperialist invasions.

Inside the empire, the states (kings) that had been dependent on it became independent, as world trade was expanded; and they abolished (extra-economic coercive) feudal systems and started fighting against each other, aiming for hegemony. In Western Europe, this situation was called absolute monarchy, in which lies the origin of the nation-state. A nation is formed when people, who have been stratified by the feudal system, become equal to each other by obeying a single absolute king.⁸

The nation cannot be reduced to an ethnic group (people) or the communality of language or religion. The same ethnic group belongs to different nations every now and then, and so do those who speak the same language or believe the same religion. Moreover, the nation cannot be reduced to local communality because those spatially separated can form a single nation. The homogeneity that transcends differences between peoples, communities, or languages is established under the absolutist state. However, while people are subjects—the king’s people—the nation remains impossible. It is not until the absolute monarchy is abolished and, thereby, those who were subjected to the king become subjective subjects that the nation-state can be formed. That is to say, the nation-state is formed when its people are represented as if they were older than their own origin, which is forgotten.

This view, however, does not fundamentally surpass the idea that the nation is a superstructure determined by economic structures. Neither does Anderson’s argument that the nation is an imagined community. We must therefore see the nation, not as an imaginary product born of the modern capital and state, but rather as a part of the structure necessary for their existence. The nation is not a mere fancy but *imagination* that mediates and unites the state and market society.

As stated before, sentimentality about the nation’s foundation does not indicate that the nation is a noneconomic superstructure or mental issue, but that the nation is rooted in a type of exchange—reciprocal exchange—that is different from commodity exchange. The nation is nothing but an “imagined” recovery of the community that was destroyed by the economy of commodity exchange. Hence the nation has elements that are fundamentally opposed to the state and the capitalistic market economy. Yet, even if the nation is an imagined recovery of the community, it is at base different from community as such. In order to grasp the nation, we need to see a fourth type of exchange, which belongs to neither the state, community, nor market economy.

This fourth type of exchange is a form that counters the other three types. In Figures 1.1 and 1.2, it is located in the position of X. It is similar to the market economy in that each individual is free from the constraints of the community, and at the same time similar to the community in that, contrary to the market economy's competition and dissolution of class, it aims for the exchange of reciprocal aid—a market economy that does not cause accumulation of capital. This voluntary, independent network of reciprocal exchange does not need a superior, political apparatus of the state and is incompatible with the principles of the state. It can be called communism, but to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding, I call this network an association. It is the only principle that transcends the state, community, and capitalism. Association is different from the other three because it does not exist in reality, and in that sense it is a *utopia*. But as long as the three types of exchange persist, so does the exchange principle of association as a regulative idea.

In premodern society, this idea took the form of universal religion; it emerged in the city within the ancient empire. That is, universal religion opened up to the individual who had been at one point cut loose from the communal link. It was opposed to the old community and denied its old religion: "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me . . ." (Matt. 10:35–37); "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. 12:50).

At the same time, however, universal religion denies *Gesellschaft* [society] and merchant capitalism and attempts to create a society of mutuality. In the early stages of its movement, universal religion rejected the idea of private property: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven" (Matt. 19:21). Universal religion thus emerged as a counter-movement against merchant capitalism, community, and the state. It is, however, clearly an "imagined community," and once expanded and well-established, it made compromises with the state or empire and with the religious customs of the community: universal religion, in fact, became the support for the state and community.

Universal religion expanded into *world religion*, as it were, but in this case the "world" was limited within the boundary of the world empire. That is, universal religion lost its universality and became a religion of the world empire. Nonetheless, universal religion retains its authentic trait in its text. Hence, it has been revived historically by re-reading the text in various contexts. As a result, numbers of agrarian or social movements have emerged by taking the form of religious (fundamentalist) movements.⁹

Although Anderson has defined the nation as an “imagined community” that supplements religion, universal religion is precisely the first “imagined community.” If the nation has the ideality that mere ethnic groups do not have, it is because the nation assumes the status of this universal religion. For example, when the nation’s contours are blurred in a borderless economy, either ethnic nationalism or transnational, religious fundamentalism appears. In such cases, can we regard religion as a supplement to the nation? As a mode of idea, the nation is not religion, but at the base of nation and religion, we should see a certain type of exchange. Viewed in this perspective, it becomes obvious that the nation and religion cannot be abolished merely by Enlightenment-like critique. As Marx points out, they cannot be abolished unless their demand is fulfilled.

In probing the formation of the nation, we must take association into account, whether it takes a form of religion or not. I have stated, for example, that social movements against feudalism emerged as forms of religious movement. They did so not because bourgeois economy was undeveloped. For example, the English revolution starting in 1642, which is called the first bourgeois revolution, emerged as a religious revolution prosecuted by Puritans. Although there are various kinds of Puritans, the party called the Levellers was, perhaps, the most important. They represented the class of independent producers of simple commodities who went into decline with the expansion of the capitalist economy. In this respect, they are similar to nineteenth century anarchists. Moreover, the Diggers, who represented the agrarian proletariat, were clearly communistic. However, their political views were described as religious ideals such as “millenarianism.” These radical parties contributed significantly to the overturn of the absolute monarchy, but the new regime purged them. The revolution ended with the Restoration of 1660. As a matter of course, the Restoration was not a return to the absolute monarchy, but close to a constitutional monarchy, which was established decisively by the Glorious Revolution in 1688. At this point, the bourgeois revolution concluded, but what is important is the fact that the bourgeois revolution started as a social movement by a non-bourgeois class, and also as a religious movement, and concluded with the oppression of that class and movement.

The French Revolution displays similarities. Although the revolutionary movement did not appear religious, its motivating power came not from the bourgeoisie but from such associationist movements as the *sans-culottes*. When the achievements of this movement were suppressed by the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois state was established. The slogan of the French Revolution—liberty, equality, and fraternity—in a sense symbolizes the three types of exchange: liberty stands for market economy, equality for redistribution by the state, and fraternity for association. However, this

fraternity stressed by the *sans-culottes* was eventually absorbed into the *nation*. Put differently, those who had been *citizens* at the beginning of the Revolution eventually became the *French* (people). According to research conducted at the beginning of the Revolution, little more than forty percent of citizens could speak French. It is the state that subsequently introduced *national education*.

The associationism that failed in the French Revolution later re-emerged clearly as socialism. In this case, interestingly, early socialists, including Proudhon, generally regarded primitive Christianity as a socialist movement and their own movement as its re-enactment. This kind of analogy was not an arbitrary fancy, but fell into disuse after the revolution of 1848. This disuse was not caused by the emergence of “scientific socialism” but by the fact that after the defeat of the 1848 revolution the X element was absorbed into the nation-state. In France, the X was absorbed into Louis Bonaparte’s national socialism and in England into Fabian socialism—a socialism within the boundary of parliamentary democracy or social democracy.

Today, the capitalist economy, state, and nation supplement and complement each other. For example, when everyone enjoys economic freedom and thereby economic inequality and class conflict occur, the nation denies the problems through a sentiment of reciprocal aid and the state regulates capital and redistributes its wealth. That is, the Borromean knot of capital-nation-state is both flexible and inextricable; and it was established in the advanced capitalist countries in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

How did Marxists resist this trinity? In his later years, Marx saw the only hope in associations—producers’ cooperatives—which he caught a glimpse of in the Paris Commune.¹⁰ In reality, however, socialist movements in advanced countries converged on social democracy. After the Social Democratic Party succeeded in the German parliament at the end of the nineteenth century, Engels believed that socialism could be realized in the parliamentary system. Bernstein inherited Engels’ legacy and completely disposed of the remains of his predecessor’s classic theory of revolution. After 1848, any violent revolution became impossible in advanced capitalist countries. It is only in developing countries, in which the knot of capital-nation-state had not been fully established, that violent revolutions took place.¹¹

In the twentieth century, there were two currents that attempted to overcome the trinity of capital-nation-state. One was Leninism, which sought to abolish capitalism through state control and planning. However, while repressing the market economy, it strengthened the state’s power. In this direction, the “withering away of the state” is totally impossible. What Leninism brought about was, indeed, hierarchical bureaucracy by the party

and economic stagnation. As a result, historically Leninism could either collapse, as the Soviet Union did, or re-introduce a market economy, as China did. It would also adopt the parliamentary system. In the end, all varieties of Leninism have settled in a form of social democracy.

The other current is fascism, which is not state socialism but that of the nation. In opposition to both capitalism and the state's control (by the communist party), fascism finds a key to overcome them in the nation. Clearly the nation cannot overcome capitalism and the state but creates an "imagined community" that fantasizes such an overcoming. In reality, this resulted in reinforcement of imperialism or national capitalism, but fascism appeared considerably attractive to people in many countries precisely because it provided a dream world in which every contradiction was resolved there and then.

It should be noted that many fascist leaders were originally decentralistic anarchists—or associationists. Italian fascists, for instance, were influenced by a theorist of anarchism, Sorel. At its core, German Nazism was also agrarian anarchism against industrial capitalism and statism. Heidegger was attracted to the Nazis for the ideal of *Sturmabteilung* [storm trooper] and withdrew from the party when it was purged. This means, however, not that Heidegger quit the Nazis, but that the Nazis quit being the Nazis. It should not be forgotten that Japanese fascism, too, was intensified and encouraged not only by the state's reinforcement, but also by counter-movements against the state. For example, Gondō Seikyō, an agrarian anarchist, who rejected the state and insisted on self-government of agrarian communities—*shashoku*—had a strong influence on Japanese fascism.¹²

2. NATION AND AESTHETICS

2.1 *Moral Sentiment and Imagination*

The trinity, or the Borromean knot, of capital-nation-state was formed in modernity. In this case, it is the nation that links the state and market society together. So how does the nation make this possible? As indicated before, the nation is an "imagined community," but it is not a mere fancy or fantasy; it functions as the imagination that mediates and synthesizes the state and market society. We need to investigate the imagination, for the nation was formed at the same time as in the history of philosophy the imagination assumed the position that mediates sensibility and understanding (Figs 1.3 and 1.4).

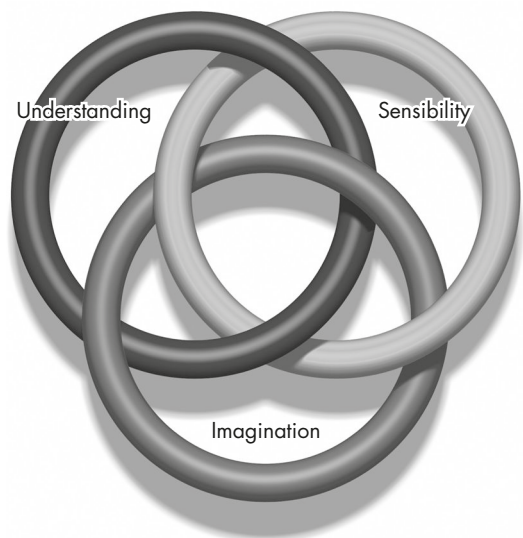


Fig 1.3.

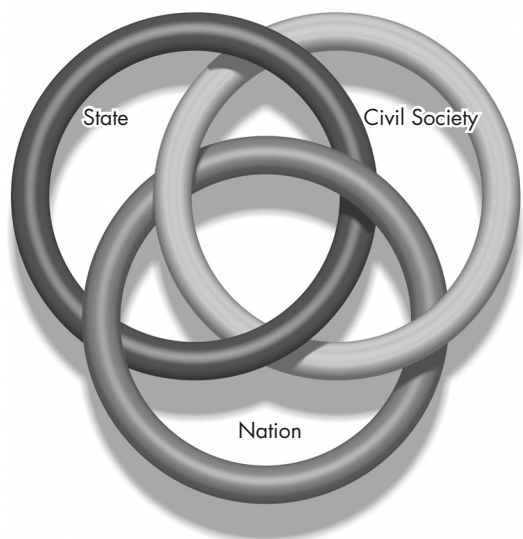


Fig 1.4.

This kind of problem was philosophically thematized first in Britain—particularly in Scotland—where the capitalist market economy was already highly developed. In the first half of the eighteenth century, for example, a kind of sentiment came into notice: what Hutcheson calls moral sentiments.

His disciple, Adam Smith, examined the moral sentiments and described sympathy as the following:

How selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in his nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it. Of this kind is pity or compassion, the emotion which we feel for the misery of others, when we either see it, or are made to conceive it in a very lively manner. That we often derive sorrow from the sorrow of others, is a matter of fact too obvious to require any instances to prove it. . . .¹³

Needless to say, Smith is the economist who argued that the pursuit of profit by each individual would result in the increase of welfare as a whole and insisted therefore on *laissez-faire*. Originally, however, Smith was a moral philosopher. More precisely, he remained a moral philosopher, and his political economy was placed at the end of his system of moral philosophy. Still his theory of moral sentiments does not seem compatible with the idea of the *laissez-faire* market, which affirms the survival of the fittest. This incompatibility is usually resolved by saying that, while insisting on *laissez-faire*, Smith was aware of its inevitable detriments, and that his moral philosophy was intended to be its remedy. Smith is thus considered a precursor of welfare economics.

Yet Smith is neither a market fundamentalist nor a welfare-stater. Smith attempted to base *laissez-faire* on the theory of moral sentiments to begin with. How could this ever be possible? There is a subtle but decisive difference between Hutcheson's and Smith's ideas of moral sentiments. While for Hutcheson moral sentiments are opposed to selfishness, what Smith calls sympathy is compatible with not only pity but also selfishness since sympathy is the "imagination," by which we place ourselves in the situation of others.

[Our senses] never did, and never can, carry us beyond our own person, and it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. Neither can that faculty help us to this any other way, than by representing to us what would be our own, if we were in his case. It is the impressions of our own senses only, not those of his, which our imaginations copy. By the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure the same person with him, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though weaker in degree, is not altogether unlike them.¹⁴

What Smith calls sympathy emerged for the first time in a situation in which selfishness was affirmed. Hutcheson insisted on moral sentiments in opposition to selfishness; it is rather Hutcheson's theory of moral sentiments that acknowledges the market economy, on the one hand, and tries to resolve its problem morally or politically, on the other hand. According to Smith, however, morality must be and can be realized not in the morals, laws, or the state but just in the market economy. Smith's *moral philosophy* is *economics*, which attempts to fulfill the same demand that religions, morals, and laws (of the state) have sought to fulfill, without recourse to them.

Smith's theory became unintelligible because the capitalist economy after the Industrial Revolution was different from the one in Smith's mind. He rejected the mercantilism of the preceding era, which was based on the principles of merchant capitalism. It gains profit from the difference in trade; it is also linked to the absolutist state. According to mercantilism, the wealth of a given state can be gained only through the sacrifice of other states. Smith objected to these principles and policies of mercantilism. In his critique of mercantilism, he conceived of the market economy not as the market of merchant capitalism but as capitalist production by independent producers and a world in which they exchanged. Since capitalist production enhances its productivity by division and cooperation of labor, it can gain fair profit through fair exchange. Hence, in opposing mercantilism, which was a political equivalent to absolutism, Smith also opposed the state's intervention and monopoly and asserted the renunciation of colonies. He thought that, except for the minimal state (the night-watchman state), the state as such was unnecessary and should be abolished.

The point in reading Smith is that the capitalist production he witnessed was not the one after the Industrial Revolution, but the one that remained at the stage of manufacturing or handicraft, as agricultural economies did. The capitalist was a master, who worked by himself, as the owners of today's small businesses do. It was important for Smith to associate the isolated, independent producers through capital and, thereby, to enhance productivity to the degree that had been impossible by each one of them individually. In the age of Smith, there was no significant difference between capitalist production and producers' cooperatives—or associations. The producers' cooperatives were set up by artisan laborers to counter the division between capital and labor, which became more distinct as capitalist production was mechanized. Smith witnessed capitalist production prior to the Industrial Revolution, which even could be considered associationist in nature. Smith conceived

that in this production a moral world could be realized through free and fair exchange. What he calls moral sentiments is that which upholds such an economy.

Needless to say, however, history in reality did not proceed as Smith had expected. Capitalist production as such caused the difference—surplus value—and the division of class. Confronting this reality, socialist thought emerged. As in the 1820s Ricardian socialism grew out of Ricardo, Smith's theory of moral economy yielded a socialism regardless of his intention: the socialism that seeks to solve the problems of capitalism socially—that is, by means of cooperatives of independent producers—without recourse to the state.

The Romantics sought such socialism. It is worth noting that there were numerous socialists among the British Romantics. For instance, Shelley the poet was married to Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin and adored her father William Godwin, an anarchist. This tradition linking the Romantics and socialism continued through Ruskin and William Morris in the nineteenth century. Morris, the organizer of the Arts and Crafts movement, was one of the first Marxists in Britain, but his Marxism differed entirely from that of social democracy or Leninism, but neared associationism or anarchism. Taking the tradition since Adam Smith into account, Morris's associationism is not surprising.

What is called "fraternity" in the French Revolution is called by Smith "sympathy" or "fellow feeling." Fraternity has a Christian origin, but as Smith's idea of sympathy is different from religious compassion and caused in situations where selfishness is admitted, fraternity at this period is far from the Christian idea. Fraternity was an expression of the association of skilled workers. Yet, after the Revolution, the nation assimilated fraternity. Resisting this assimilation, fraternity revived in early socialism, especially in Proudhon's associationism, in the first half of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless the most influential variety of socialism was the nation's socialism that used the state for the solution of social problems and industrial development, as Saint-Simonism did. Louis Bonaparte, for example, was a Saint-Simonist. In the first French Revolution of 1789, associationism was absorbed into the nation: Napoleon became an emperor. The second revolution of 1848 resulted in the accession of Louis Bonaparte, who amounted to no more than the nephew of Napoleon. As Marx points out, the second revolution was a repetition of the first and occurred as farce. It should be noted, however, that precisely because Louis Bonaparte was a Saint-Simonistic socialist, he could provoke nationalism that transcended the classes.

2.2. *Sensibilization = Aestheticization*

However, sentiments such as sympathy or fraternity were not explored further in Britain and France; rather, it was in Germany that they were explored, not at the political or economic level, but as a philosophical problem. The problem of “moral sentiments” is a question of whether or not sentiment, which had been considered a lower faculty, could have a moral or intellectual capacity. Before modernity, sensibility had been generally undervalued; it was believed that sensibility deceived the human being and that true knowledge or morality could only be found beyond sensibility. With the advance of modern science, sensibility became important, but, in fact, its importance concerned only sense-data, or perception, while sentiment remained a lower faculty. Sentiment was viewed as nothing but a passion that the human being must overcome through understanding. The eighteenth century saw an emergence of an argument that sentiment is not only capable of intellectual cognition and moral judgment, but, in a sense, a faculty that exceeds understanding and reason.¹⁵ This argument is called aesthetics, which does not mean simply a study of the beautiful. In fact, Baumgarten wrote *Aesthetica* (1750–1758) as a “science of sensual cognition,” and a theory of art comprised merely a part of it. Aesthetics, nevertheless, came to be understood as a science of the beautiful. Kant opposed this trend, writing:

The Germans are the only people who have come to use the word *aesthetic[s]* to designate what others call the critique of taste. They are doing so on the basis of a false hope conceived by that superb analyst, *Baumgarten*: he hoped to bring our critical judging of the beautiful under rational principles, and to raise the rules for such judging to the level of a science. Yet that endeavor is futile. For, as regards their principal sources, those rules or criteria are merely empirical. Hence they can never serve as determinate a priori laws to which our judgment of taste would have to conform; it is, rather, our judgment of taste which constitutes the proper touchstone for the correctness of those rules or criteria. Because of this it is advisable to follow either of two alternatives. One of these is to let this new name *aesthetic[s]* become extinct again, and to reserve the name aesthetic for the doctrine that is true science. (In doing so we would also come closer to the language of the ancients and its meaning: among the ancients the division of cognition into *aiotheta kai noeta* [the sensible and the intelligible] was quite famous.) The other alternative would be for the new *aesthetic[s]* to share the name with speculative philosophy; we would then take the name partly in its transcendental sense, and partly in the psychological meaning.¹⁶

Kant took issue with Baumgarten not because the latter used aesthetics to signify a science of the beautiful, but because Baumgarten tried to see something rational in sensibility or sentiments. In *Critique of Pure Reason*, in fact, Kant uses aesthetics only in the sense of a science of sensibility. Here Kant is consistent in his distinction between sensibility and understanding, or between the sensible and the intelligible, because thought without this distinction is metaphysics, which claims that a certain thing (God, for example) exists only because it is intelligible.

“What others call the critique of taste,” mentioned by Kant, refers to *Elements of Criticism* by Henry Home, Lord Kames, a Scottish thinker. Being a “critique of taste,” this book reflected on the possibility of aesthetic judgment of taste and its ground. Home’s project is to deduce the universality of the judgment of taste from the intrinsic principles of humanity and to argue that human sensitivity to the beautiful and the ugly is an a priori, but at the same time he adopts empirical induction to discover the general rule of taste by extensively collecting and arranging varieties of materials from every field of literature in all ages. In short, Home finds his task in establishing the fundamental principles of criticism and its assured standard as such without presupposing any particular principle heedlessly. This is Home’s “critique.” Basically Kant retains the same posture as Home’s. According to Kant’s account, there is no rule the judgment of taste has to follow; it has to be spontaneous; the judgment would be impossible if particular rules determine it. On the other hand, however, the judgment of taste cannot be made arbitrarily by each individual. To qualify as a judgment of taste, it must lay claim to the consent of everyone, without which it would be nothing but a personal agreeableness. Kant puts forth this structure in the following antinomy:

1. Thesis. The judgment of taste is not based on concepts, for otherwise it would be possible to dispute about it (decide by means of proofs).
2. Antithesis. The judgment of taste is based on concepts, for otherwise, despite its variety, it would not even be possible to argue about it (to lay claim to the necessary assent of others to this judgment).¹⁷

Kant’s point in his argument about the “criticism of taste” is not limited to the problem of the judgment of taste: it is also the case with sensual cognition in general. Although Kant makes a clear distinction between sensibility and understanding, he conceives imagination as a link between them.¹⁸ According to Kant, imagination belongs to understanding, but at the same time it has a relationship to sensibility. Kant writes, “Human cognition has two stems, viz., sensibility and understanding, which perhaps spring from a common root, though one unknown to us,”¹⁹ but he does not attempt

to present this in a positive light. Kant states in *Critique of the Power of Judgment* that the antinomy implicates something supersensible at the bottom of the sensible intuition. According to Kant, however, it cannot be presented positively, but only inferred by a “skeptical method.” Baumgarten’s “aesthetics,” on the other hand, presupposed the synthesis between the sensible and the supersensible.

The point is that the imagination, which philosophy had undervalued as a false representation of perception or an arbitrary fancy, was considered by Kant indispensable. The imagination is not only reproductive but also productive or creative. Thus sensibility, understanding, and imagination form a Borromean knot. Neither of them is dominant; the knot is impossible without either of them. The mediation by the imagination between sensibility and understanding, or reason, has a double meaning. First, there is a possibility that sensibility and reason could be synthesized. Second, such synthesis cannot be presented positively but remains imaginary—an illusion.

In opposition to Hutcheson who tried to base morality on moral sentiments, Kant thought that the moral law is rational, and that there is no morality in sentiment or sensibility. If “moral sentiments” exist, they should be born of the knowledge of the moral law, and not vice versa. In this respect, as stated before, Smith’s theory of moral sentiments differs from Hutcheson’s, for the idea of sympathy, which Smith stresses, is nothing but the imagination, by which one imagines oneself in the situation of others. It is not necessarily compassion, and it admits selfishness of others. In Kantian terms, what Smith calls sympathy is the moral law, which obliges us to act so that we imagine ourselves in the situation of others who are free beings.

However, the idea that some sentiments are rational a priori is to sensibelize or aestheticize morality (or reason). Kant criticizes the idea of the direct link between sensibility and understanding (or reason); it substantializes the imaginary. I call this kind of thought “aesthetic,” which is clearly not limited to the science of the beautiful.

In spite of Kant’s “critique,” the Romantic philosophers of the younger generation began with the presupposition of the unity between nature and freedom, or subject and object. Schelling, for example, conceived the idea of intellectual intuition (*Intuitiver Verstand*), which could transcend the duality of sensibility and understanding (or speculative reason) as their synthesis. In other words, he found art at the bottom of every cognition. Hegel, on the other hand, unlike Fichte and Schelling, attempted a return to Kant’s antinomy and grasped it dialectically, but fundamentally presupposed a synthesis similar to intellectual intuition. Although Hegel posited philosophy above art, philosophy had already been *aestheticized*. It

is natural that this philosophy led to an idealism, in which what can be *thought* can *be*. From Kant's viewpoint, Romantic philosophy is another version of metaphysics.

This is, however, merely common knowledge about the history of philosophy. What is more important for us is that for Kant the problem of morality is directly linked to that of economy. For him, the core of morality is not situated in good or evil but in freedom. In that case, the moral law, which commands us to use humanity in the person of every other "always at the same time as end [as a free being] and never merely as means," must not be understood without referring to actual problems of economy. The law includes the "categorical imperative" for abolishing those politico-economic situations in which others are used exclusively as means. Adam Smith saw the possibility of this abolishment in the mode of capitalist manufacturing production, as I have argued contrary to market fundamentalist understanding of his theory. In a sense, Kant came up with a similar solution to Smith: cooperatives by independent producers in opposition to merchant capital. Noticing this point, Hermann Cohen, a neo-Kantian philosopher, sees Kant as "the true and real originator of German socialism."²⁰ Needless to say, this socialism is associationism in distinction with national socialism. The former kind of socialism, however, was scornfully rejected under the full development of industrial capitalism and the corresponding national socialism.

It is the Romantic philosophers—such as Herder and Fichte—who denied Kant's associationism and transformed it into nationalism. According to the history of philosophy, Kant's dualism of sensibility and understanding was overcome by the Romantics. But Kant remained in dualism because for him the synthesis of sensibility and understanding by the imagination is nothing but imaginary. Nevertheless the monism, which is supposed to overcome Kant's philosophy, assumes that such synthesis is not imaginary at all but has always been in existence. The question between either dualism or monism is not merely a problem of philosophical form. The transition from Kantian dualism to Romantic monism clearly corresponds to the conversion from associationism to nationalism, which occurred around the time of the French Revolution.

For Kant, to be specific, the association remains an imagined or created community²¹; he is conscious that the association is, or ought to be, created by man. The Romantics substantialized, or aestheticized, it, however. It is at this moment that the nation became substantial.²² Kant was a cosmopolitan, who resisted the overwhelming inclinations for nationalism. He kept seeking the possibility of associations of individuals free from states and communities. Precisely because of his cosmopolitanism, he was scorned by the Romantics and Hegel.

It was Herder, Kant's disciple, who first tried to overcome his master's dualism. Criticizing Rousseau's *Essay on the Origin of Languages* for basing its argument solely on sentiments, Herder emphasized in his own *Treatise on the Origin of Language* (1772) that from the beginning reason was involved:

If, that is to say, reason is no compartmentalized, separately effective force but an orientation of all forces that is distinctive to his species, *then the human being must have it in the first condition in which he is a human being* If in its first condition the soul has nothing positive of reason in it, how will this become real even in millions of succeeding conditions? . . . But the most sensuous condition of the human being was still human, and hence awareness was still effective in that condition, only in a less marked degree²³

Contrary to the subjective philosophy of the day, Herder began with the sensible, such as the clime, language, and people (*Volk*) as a community of language.²⁴ But he had already assumed the unity of sensibility and reason: he aestheticized (sensibilized) reason. Accordingly, even though Herder began with the sensible, it had latent rationality, which was supposed to be actualized eventually. Due to the attention to sensibility, his thought does not appear idealistic, but it is an idealism insofar as sensibility is already rational. Hegel called it objective idealism.

For Fichte, the core of the nation is language. The nation consists of neither the communality of kinship or region nor of a political state but of language.

To begin with, and above all else, the first, original and truly natural frontiers of states are undoubtedly their inner frontiers. Those who speak the same language are already, before all human art, joined together by mere nature with a multitude of invisible ties; they understand one another and are able to communicate ever more clearly; they belong together and are naturally one, an indivisible whole. No other nation of a different descent and language can desire to absorb and assimilate such a people without, at least temporarily, becoming confused and profoundly disturbing the steady progress of its own culture. The external limits of territories only follow as a consequence of this inner frontier, drawn by man's spiritual nature itself. And from the natural view of things it is not simply because men dwell within the confines of certain mountains and rivers that they are a people; on the contrary, men live together—and, if fortune has so arranged it for them, protected by mountains and rivers—because they were already a people beforehand by a far higher law of nature. Thus lay the German nation,

sufficiently united by a common language and way of thinking, and clearly enough separated from the other peoples, in the middle of Europe, as a wall dividing unrelated tribes. It was numerous and brave enough to protect its frontiers against any foreign incursion²⁵

Fichte here distinguishes the nation from the state. While the state has its boundaries, the nation the “inner frontier.” When the inner frontier is realized, the truly rational state is established. It is clear, however, that in language such as the inner frontier the rational was already sensibilized or aestheticized. Conversely, the sensible was already spritualized. For example, language—or literature—aestheticizes mountains and rivers as scenes of the nation.

It is Hegel who completed the philosophy of German romanticism and idealism. Particularly his *Philosophy of Right* can be called the first book that illustrated the relationship between the capitalist economy, the state, and the nation. The book starts from the family and then proceeds to civil society and finally to the state. This order, however, does not signify a historical order but the dialectic structure of their relationship. Therefore, the family with which Hegel begins is not a tribal one but a modern nuclear family. At a higher level over family is situated the civil society, a world in which desires and egos compete with each other. Hegel includes in the stage of “civil society” not only market-economy society but also police, jurisdiction, and the state apparatus, including the social polity and public authority. According to Hegel, however, this society is merely “the state as the Understanding envisages it,” lacking sentimental aspects of the nation. The unity of the civil society and the nation is realized in the “rational” state—or the nation-state. Of course, this state did not exist in Germany. When Hegel wrote about it, the state he had in mind was contemporary Britain.

Hegel thus captured the knot of capital-nation-state as such. From Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, statists, socialists, and nationalists can deduce their own theoretical grounds, and these grounds could be criticized on the basis of the same book. Rather than the strength of Hegel’s thought, however, it is the power of the knot of capital-nation-state that makes his argument all-inclusive. Hegel’s philosophy cannot easily be denied precisely because it grasped—*begreifen* in Hegel’s own word—the knot structurally. Yet his philosophy has forgotten the fundamental fact that the knot is produced by the imagination, which in this case assumes the form of nation. Hence the possibility for abolishing the knot remains unknowable.

Hegel implies that, on the one hand, the nation (*Volk*) is rooted in the sensible, for instance in the family or clan; but, on the other hand, he also argues that it appears only at a higher dimension—the state—which

transcends not only the family and community but also civil society. As in Herder's theory, there is a germ of reason already at the stage of sensibility and it is later to be actualized. Here the imagination, which links sensibility and understanding (or reason), is absent: the fact that the link is merely an imaginary product is forgotten. In short, Hegel's rational state is already aestheticized.

3. TWO EMPIRES

3.1 *Empire and Imperialism*

The knot of capital-nation-state is so firm that all attempts to surpass capitalism have failed. When these attempts were proven a sheer failure at the end of the twentieth century, social democracy was approved as the only possibility. As a matter of course, this possibility is not an overcoming of capitalism at all; it merely means that the knot of capital-nation-state has been institutionally established. Yet, along with this establishment, a new challenge to the knot of capital-nation-state began. World capitalism assimilated the nation-states in order to survive, but then, for its own maintenance, capitalism must fight against the nation-states in itself.

Among the conspicuous phenomena after the 1990s, we find on the one hand an upsurge of ethnocentrism—that is in fact nationalism—and on the other hand religious fundamentalism crossing the boundaries of nations. These phenomena indicate that the old frameworks of the nation-state have been shaken and have become dysfunctional. There is an explanation for these phenomena: the so-called globalization of capitalism has advanced and, thereby, accelerated the fluidity of capital and labor; and, in addition, due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, those underdeveloped countries which lost realistic perspective and direction for the future turned to religious fundamentalism. Yet this explanation lacks a structural understanding of capital, state, nation, socialism, and religion; it just juxtaposes them and arbitrarily points out some causal relations. Therefore, this explanation is as such unable to find any *perspective* or *direction*.

The nation-state was not born from nothing. It was caused by the dissolution and partition of the empire, which served as a preceding *ground*. At present, when the nation-state's framework has been shaken, the "empire" is referred to as an alternative principle. Although the empire has already been mentioned, I would like to return to it here for further exploration. In order to avoid a common misunderstanding about the empire, we must distinguish it from imperialism. In this respect, it is helpful to consider

Hannah Arendt's comment that unlike empire, imperialism is a continuation of the nation-state:

Conquest as well as empire building had fallen into disrepute for very good reasons. They had been carried out successfully only by governments which, like the Roman Republic, were based primarily on law, so that conquest could be followed by integration of the most heterogeneous peoples by imposing upon them a common law. The nation-state, however, based upon a homogeneous population's active consent to its government ("*le plébiscite de tous les jours*"), lacked such a unifying principle and would, in the case of conquest, have to assimilate rather than to integrate, to enforce consent rather than justice, that is, to degenerate into tyranny.²⁶

There are several points to be noted here. First, although Arendt regards the Roman Empire as the only example of empire, her observation can be applied to empires of the other regions. Each empire has differences, which are not unimportant, but there are notable similarities among them. The world empire reigned over the states that ruled agrarian communities, but remained indifferent to customs of each conquered state and people unless the empire's dominance was challenged. This indifference presents a contrast to the nation, which homogenizes its members, and to imperialism, which inflicts homogeneity on all peoples. Concerning the Ottoman Empire, which survived until the twentieth century, Robert Mantran of the Annales School states the following:

... there was neither islamization nor ottommanization of the local population during the Ottoman Empire era even if the contemporary political problems obscure this reality. They retained their specific characters, their religion, their language, very often their staff, their local status, and their economic activities. The Ottomans demanded money, products, and men, but they did not seek to Turk-ify each population or each group at all cost; each region retained its own characters. This explains the emergence of nationalism in the 18th and especially 19th centuries ...²⁷

It is under the *imperialism* of Western Europe that the Ottoman *Empire* dissolved and the Arab peoples gained independence. The states of Western Europe, however, believed that they delivered the peoples from the Ottoman Empire's imperialism. This ignorance is characteristic of modern imperialism: *imperialism* is a nation-state's domination over other nations without the principles of the *empire*. As a consequence, it was inevitable that the great Western Powers, which dissolved the Ottoman Empire, immediately encountered resistance from Arab nationalists.

Second, Arendt sees the beginning of imperialism in “capital export” at the end of the nineteenth century, but before that period *imperialism* had already emerged as something different from the *empire’s* principles. In fact, Arendt herself locates the dilemma of imperialism—“[w]herever the nation-state appeared as conqueror, it aroused national consciousness and desire for sovereignty among the conquered people”—in earlier periods, such as Napoleon’s endeavor for a European union.

The inner contradiction between the nation’s body politic and conquest as a political device has been obvious since the failure of the Napoleonic dream The Napoleonic failure to unite Europe under the French flag was a clear indication that conquest by a nation led either to the full awakening of the conquered people’s national consciousness and to consequent rebellion against the conqueror, or to tyranny. And though tyranny, because it needs no consent, may successfully rule over foreign peoples, it can stay in power only if it destroys first of all the national institutions of its own people.²⁸

Napoleon’s conquest actually caused nationalism in Germany; this is a typical example in which a nation-state’s imperialistic expansion produces another nation-state. I argue, however, that imperialism should be traced back to the absolutist states of early modern Western Europe. It is not that at a certain moment the nation-state suddenly became imperialistic, but that its hegemonism resides in the origin of the nation-state. Indeed, the absolute-monarchistic states, which competed for the hegemony of the world market, compared themselves to the *empire* of the past. These states, however, can never be anything like the bygone world empires.

Here I would like to summarize again the relationship between the empire, nation-state, and imperialism. The special characteristic of the empire, first, resides in its law. The empire is not interested in direct rule over the tribes and states but rather in the relationship among them—in other words, in the security of their intercourse and commerce. The empire’s law is basically international; the laws of the Roman Empire, which formed the basis for the natural law, were fundamentally international. This is also the case with the other empires even though they did not institute international laws. In the Chinese empires, for example, the status of each subordinate peoples and states was acknowledged insofar as they paid tribute, which was nothing but a kind of trade since the tributary received in return more than it paid. The empire does not intervene in the internal affairs of its subordinate tribes and states unless they threaten the security of the trade within the empire. Often it seemed as if the world empire was established almost overnight; it is because the conqueror was hailed for the promise to secure international law and order as well as trade.

The second trait of the empire is a *world religion*. When the world empire is established by uniting tribal states, a universal religion that transcends the religion of each state or community is necessary. In the major expansion of the empire, the Roman emperor had to base it on Christianity, which until that time he had persecuted. Likewise, when the Chinese empires expanded to the scale of the Eurasian continent, Legalist thought (Shi Huangdi of the Ch'in dynasty) or Confucianism (Wu-di of the Han dynasty) was insufficient, and for that reason the Tang dynasty in fact introduced Buddhism. The Mongolian world empires also adopted Buddhism or Islam. The world religion could permeate each of the subordinate peoples and states within the empire. The Yamato dynasty of Japan, for instance, needed Buddhism to solidify its basis. Even a small state needs a universal religion that transcends old tribal gods when it develops, subsuming numerous tribes. Moreover, in a world empire, theology becomes rationalistic and comprehensive, as in Avicenna (Ibn Sina) in Arabia, Thomas Aquinas in Western Europe, and Chu Hsi in China.

The third trait of the empire is a *lingua franca*—a world language. Latin, Chinese characters, and the Arabic alphabet are written linguistic forms used by numerous tribes and states. Although there were innumerable spoken languages—vernaculars—under empires, they were not considered *languages*. These vernaculars were given the same status as dialects are today. Because the empire's law, religion, and philosophy are expressed in this world language, it is in that language above all that the empire's distinctive quality emerges; for those who do not belong to the ruling class, the world language is incomprehensible. For example, unintelligible words are called Chinese (*Chinpun kanpun* [*Kanbun*]) in Japanese, and "Greek" in English; the philosophical concepts in these languages of empires were regarded as rational and highbrow while vernaculars, or spoken languages, were slighted. In philosophical terms, this corresponds to the fact that sensibility has been slighted as the source of deception. Conversely, the modern emphasis on sensibility and sentiment corresponds to that on vernacular or spoken language over written language.²⁹

These traits of the empire are linked to each other. In other words, the processes of independence—of a sovereign state from the empire, of faith from the world church (or the state), and of the vernacular, which was dominated by the world (written) language, as itself written language—are all related to each other. In Europe, for instance, Luther's Reformation is generally thought of as a religious issue, but it assumes more complex significance: his resistance to the Roman Catholic Church was primarily a rejection of indulgences but also a resistance to the economic rule of the Church as a feudal power. In that sense, Luther's Reformation included the independence of the tribal states under the *empire* and thereby brought

about sovereign states, which overrode the laws of the empire and the church, and furthermore agrarian movements that demanded freedom from feudal orders.

Regarding Luther's Reformation, however, the significance of his translation of the Bible into a vernacular (High German) should not be forgotten: the translation not only advanced the Reformation by making the Bible accessible to common people but also became the foundation of standard German. The point is not that a vernacular was written but that world language was translated into the vernacular. Luther's translation formed national German precisely because it was the translation of the Bible. Clearly the Gutenberg revolution (of printing) cannot be neglected, but it is the translation of the Bible that established the publishing industry of the period. The vernacular translation of the Bible gave the vernacular (High German) a noble and sacred impression comparable to *the language of the empire*, such as Greek, Hebrew, or Latin. National language is complete, however, when the fact that it is translated from written language, such as Latin or Chinese characters, is forgotten, and when it is assumed to be derived directly from sentiments or interiority. That is, at the moment the romantic philosophers, such as Herder, began to investigate the "origin of language," the national language had already been completed. The spoken languages they discovered had already been translated from the written language, which was the language of the empire. Put differently, the sensibility they saw had already been mediated by reason. I have called "aesthetic" the romantic way of beginning with the synthesis of sensibility and understanding (or reason); this is also the case with the linguistic level. Fichte argued the following:

And so we have solved our immediate task, to find the characteristic that distinguishes the Germans from the other peoples of Teutonic descent. The difference resulted immediately from the original separation of the common stock and consists in this, that the Germans still speak a living language and have done so ever since it first streamed forth from nature, whereas the other Teutonic tribes speak a language that stirs only on the surface yet is dead at the root.³⁰

In the foregoing addresses I have set forth, and demonstrated with reference to history, those characteristics which the Germans possess as an original people, and as one that has the right to call itself the people as such, in contradistinction to other tribes that have separated from it, just as the word "German" in its proper signification denotes exactly that.³¹

Here Fichte forgets the fact that standard German was established by translation. When the above statement was declared under the French

occupation, it merely cheered Germans; but what meaning does it have after Germany was actually unified in 1871? Needless to say, Fichte's words function as a discourse of *imperialism*. The fact that a discourse that forms a nation-state can be that of imperialism proves that imperialism expands from the nation-state.

3.2. Two "Empires"

Since the collapse of the Cold War structure, the world appears to be unified under the overwhelming hegemony of the United States, but numerous blocs are being formed, on the other hand. These opposing tendencies are developing simultaneously. Likewise there are two directions of argument regarding *empire*. One is a concept of empire proposed by Negri and Hardt. According to their account, with the Cold War ending in the 1990s, imperialism was over and the empire emerged. This is indicated by the Gulf War (1991). "The importance of the Gulf War derives rather from the fact that it presented the United States as the only power able to manage international justice, *not as a function of its own national motives but in the name of global right*."³²

Yet I cannot agree with the idea that the United States is not imperialistic but rather an empire. Any nation-state cannot help becoming imperialistic if it attempts to be both a nation-state and an empire; and this imperialism inevitably has caused and still causes resistance not only from peoples of the other states but also American people. Of course, Negri and Hardt do not argue that the United States is an empire, but that "Empire" is a place of nowhere.

[The capitalist market] is thwarted by barriers and exclusions; it thrives instead by including always more within its sphere. Profit can be generated only through contact, engagement, interchange, and commerce. The realization of the world market would constitute the point of arrival of this tendency. In its ideal form there is no outside to the world market: the entire globe is its domain. We might thus use the form of the world market as a model for understanding imperial sovereignty In this smooth space of Empire, there is no *place* of power—it is both everywhere and nowhere. Empire is an *ou-topia*, or really a *non-place*.³³

In short, what Negri and Hardt call "Empire" is nothing but the world market or world capitalism. What world capitalism wants is to gain surplus value through liberalistic exchange. World capitalism regards any

resistance to, or intervention in, itself by a state or regime as anti-liberal or anti-democratic. It might seem that the United States practices this world capitalism, but the United States is a nation-state by itself and motivated by its own interests. That is, it is situated within world capitalism and at the same time led by “its own national motives.” To act “in the name of global right” does not mean that the state is unimperialistic in the slightest. Rather, after the twentieth century, imperialism exists only in the gesture of rejecting it. Indeed the logic proposed by philosophers of the twentieth century, such as Heidegger and Nishida Kitarō, in order to overcome the modern world-system—namely, capitalism, the nation, and the state—resulted in theoretically grounding the German Third Reich and Japan’s Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere; for their philosophy merely *interpreted* the reality of imperialism in different ways.³⁴

It is true that after 1990, with the disappearance of the resisting power *outside* of the world market—the Soviet Union—the United States has been dominant militarily and economically. It is also true that with the progress of globalization the nation-state has become less significant. Yet it is not true that these processes can end “the modern world-system.” As I shall explain later, reality is not proceeding in that direction. In this respect, we need to look back at the past. There are a few precedents in history for a situation in which a state overwhelmed the world militarily and economically. Such a dominant status was achieved by the British Empire, which conquered the seven seas of the world and was called the workshop of the world.

It is at this period that Marx wrote *Capital*. His thinking is concerned with world capitalism: capitalism should be investigated not within the boundary of a state but in the world economy. Marx maintains that capitalist production does not exist without foreign trade.³⁵ No state can attain economic autonomy; the world-system can subsume each state’s economy under the division of labor, regardless of its resistance. The nation-state, rather than “national economy,” is formed as such in the world market. Marx might appear to explore the economy of Britain only, but this does not mean that he modeled pure capitalism after Britain. The British economy itself was enabled by foreign trade. Therefore Marx attempted to grasp world capitalism by internalizing the world economy outside Britain into its inside. He did so in order to object to the common view of seeing world capitalism as the sum of the “national economies” of all states. Hence, the world grasped by *Capital* has no *outside*.

In this sense, it is possible to say that Marx’s thought was conceived inside the liberal British *Empire*. As a result, he gained a perspective in which the nations and the states will be dissolved as capitalism advances and divided globally into the two classes of capitalists and the proletariat,

the latter of whom will be victorious eventually. Reality, however, went in the opposite direction. In Marx's late years, the working class became wealthier and withdrew from the class struggle, turning to moderate social democracy. Yet, from the vantage point of world capitalism, the British working class became wealthier because they received the distribution of surplus value that capital gained from the Irish and India colonies. This distribution eased the class conflict domestically, but naturally people of the impoverished colonies started their resistance against Britain. The class struggle was appeased domestically but re-emerged externally, taking the form of nationalism.

In competition against Britain, furthermore, Germany, America, France, and Japan achieved outstanding development of capitalism in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Particularly in heavy industries, Britain was overtaken. The state's intervention was necessary for heavy industries, which required vast amounts of capital; and Britain, which had conquered the world by light industry, fell behind in the next stage. It is in the stage of imperialism that the old colonial powers and the new states started fighting over the repartition of the world market. That British Empire which was the sole winner in the first half of the nineteenth century could be what Negri and Hardt call the "Empire," which realizes world capitalism, but in the latter half of the century it explicitly turned to *imperialism*.

This is the point that was not investigated by Marx, who wrote from within the British Empire and the world market. As a result, Marxists later stumbled upon the problem of the nation and state. Negri and Hardt presume that the nation-states will vanish under the "Empire," or world capital, against which the "multitude" resists globally. What they mean by "multitude" is obscure. Among the examples of revolts by the "multitude" to dissolve the Empire, aboriginal and environmental movements are counted. Certainly these movements are not proletarian, but Negri and Hardt's perspective is fundamentally not different from Marx's prospect for the worldwide struggle between bourgeois and proletariat: there is no insight into the nation and state.

No doubt the nation-state is diluted by world capitalism. The transnational movements of capital and labor make a state's economic policy inoperative and its welfare and employment policies difficult. Resistance to globalization is fierce but no longer erupts in the form of nationalism or socialism. Instead, what has emerged is a union of states, which denies old nationalism, or religious fundamentalism beyond nations. This is the context for recent reference to "empire."

Samuel Huntington suggested that an age of the "clash of civilizations" began when the Cold War ended. According to his account, the world at

present is divided not by the conflict of political or economic ideologies, as it was during the period of the Cold War, but more radically by the conflict of deeper-rooted “civilizations.” In this case, “civilization” refers to a larger unit than “culture,” which corresponds to the nation-state; and needless to say, “civilization” corresponds to the world empires of the past. Yet it is the world economy, not deep “civilizations,” that causes this “clash.” Based on Toynbee’s comparative theory of civilization, Huntington’s concept of “civilization” explicitly reflects the politico-economic situation of the current world; indeed Huntington’s has a smaller number of civilizations than Toynbee’s classification while counting Japan as one civilization by itself. Huntington’s attention to the contemporary politico-economy is also shown by his treatment of the Islamic regions as a civilization that is alien to the West.

As a matter of course, we cannot disregard historical backgrounds. The nation-states we know today were born either from dissolutions and partitions of the world empires, which had subsumed the premodern tribal states, or from the independence of tribes that had been arbitrarily separated and assimilated by the rule of modern colonialism and imperialism. In either case, if an investigation of the nation-state disregards the empire as its preceding *ground*, not only the origin but also the future of the nation-state would be incomprehensible; for, even though the *figure* of the nation-state appeared when the *ground* of the empire disappeared, the former still retains the communality of the preceding imperial period. At the same time, however, the nation-state also preserves the unforgettable memory of conflict and struggle. Renan once stated that the oblivion of history is necessary for a nation to be built. The same can be said about the establishment of a state that covers wider regions. The extensive state is, thus, not based on memory exclusively: it is also an “imagined” or created community.

Yet, it is due to the pressure of world capitalism that the states bracket each memory and form a union by greatly limiting their sovereignty. Although, since Napoleon, there have been attempts in Europe to organize a “European Union,” they only turned out to be French or German *imperialism*. The European Union of today is trying to avoid it, but it is false to assume that, thereby, the modern system of the nation-state has been overcome. The formation of the Union merely signifies that world capitalism, or the world market, pressured several states to gather and form one huge state. In fact, Napoleon’s European union was also an economic defense against Britain’s trade offensive.

Then what about the counter-movements against capitalism? As mentioned before, among the examples of revolts by the “multitude” to dissolve

the empire, Negri and Hardt cite aboriginal and environmental movements. Nothing can be comprehended, however, if we see these movements merely as varieties of revolts by the multitude. It is necessary to grasp the structural cause that makes these movements possible. I believe that they should be located in the position of *association*.³⁶ With this structural understanding, the complementary relationship between capital, the state, and the nation will be clarified, as well as the way to sublimate capital and the state at least. Otherwise, various movements of anti-globalization would be isolated from and opposed to each other, or merged into the nation or religion, and ultimately absorbed into the state.

Finally, I would discuss the nation and religion again. Anderson sees the nation as an “imagined community” that was formed in the decline of religion in order to supplement it, but the question is, what is meant by religion. Having written, “[f]or Germany, the critique of religion is essentially completed; and the critique of religion is the prerequisite of every critique,” Marx began to criticize the “religion” that was called the nation-state and capital.³⁷ Regarding religion in a narrow sense, he writes the following:

The wretchedness of religion is at once an expression of and a protest against real wretchedness. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of the people is a demand for their true happiness. The call to abandon illusions about their condition is the call to abandon a condition which requires illusions. Thus, the critique of religion is the critique in embryo of the vale of tears of which religion is the halo.³⁸

This famous passage is not a critique of religion, as commonly believed, but a critique of the Enlightenment’s critique of religion. Religion is an illusion, but this illusion conveys in itself a grievance and protest against reality. Therefore, without realizing the illusion of religion, it is impossible to abolish religion itself. Beginning from this point, Marx says the following: “[y]ou cannot abolish philosophy without making it a reality.” In this case, “philosophy” refers to Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* and virtually refers to the nation-state. Yet Marx adds the following: you cannot “make philosophy a reality without abolishing it.”³⁹ In this case, since philosophy refers to the nation-state, it follows that we cannot make the nation-state a reality without abolishing it; or in terms of religion, we cannot make religion a reality without abolishing it.

Put into our context, we cannot be satisfied with the Enlightenment-like critique of religion and the nation; for these two are critiques of capital and

the state and protests against them and, as such, carry the embryo of association within them. So long as these critiques and protests remain national or religious, however, they will ultimately result in supporting capital and the state. Hence critiques of the nation and religion are still indispensable. Again, the structural comprehension of capital, the state, the nation, religion, and association is of the utmost importance.

2

TRANSCRITIQUE ON KANT AND FREUD

In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant's critique was seemingly directed at an antiquated theological metaphysics. However, although Kant remarked in the preface that metaphysics, which had been the "queen of all sciences," had declined and become the scoff of the world, he maintained that the various metaphysical tasks imposed on reason had not disappeared and argued that we should aim at their solution practically, that is, morally. Therefore, we should say that what Kant criticized was not ancient metaphysics but rather its derision by the Enlightenment. Enlightenment is the liberation from illusions. If the illusions are errors caused by the senses, as the philosophers of the Enlightenment assumed, it is easy to rectify them by reason. Yet, there is one kind of illusion that cannot be abolished, and which, even if abolished forcibly, is always reproduced in another form. Kant calls this transcendental illusion. Transcendental illusion is that which is produced not by the senses but by the claims of reason itself. Kant writes: "Human reason has the peculiar fate in one of its cognitions that it is burdened with questions which it cannot dismiss, since they are given to it as problems by the nature of reason itself, but which it also cannot answer, since they transcend every capacity of human reason."¹ The "questions" which afflict reason are, after all, rooted in the finitude of human beings and in their wish to transcend it. The Enlightenment dismissed religion as a mere illusion. When one is liberated from religion, however, it does not follow that one is liberated from the afflictions caused by finitude. Religion is merely replaced by another illusion, like that of the nation.

Transcendental illusion is never limited to antiquated theological metaphysics. It is also found in the thoughts of romantic philosophers such as Herder and Fichte, who followed after Kant's critique. The point is that the idea of nation still embraces theological and metaphysical questions. In this regard, Benedict Anderson's remarks on the nation are suggestive. Among his reflections on "imagined communities," the most important

is his insight that what secures an individual's immortality is situated in the core of the nation. According to Anderson, this attribute of the nation was caused by the decline of the religious mode of thought in eighteenth century Western Europe, which was dominated by the world-views of the Enlightenment and rationalism. It is nationalism, Anderson argues, that provided the "imaginative response" in place of religion: the nation provides each individual with eternity, and his or her existence with meaning. Here, however, I'd like to point out that what Anderson calls the "religious mode of thought," which was dissolved by the Enlightenment and rational secularism, is not religion per se, so much as a communal mode of thought. Universal religions such as Christianity or Buddhism were formed in opposition to established communities or religions, but when they took root within specific communities, they still had to meet their demands. Therefore, as those communities declined, religion could recover its universal nature. In fact, religion developed, rather than declined, in individualistic forms (such as Protestantism) after the fall of the community. Accordingly, we should say that what nations achieved in place of religion is the imaginary recovery of the lost community. The collapse of the community is brought on by the loss of generational temporality, which had ensured the continuity of the community and the eternity of individuals. In the agrarian community, reciprocity is assumed not only between its existing members, but also between the dead (ancestors) and the unborn (descendants). For instance, the living act in consideration of their descendants and also, as descendants themselves, thank their ancestors who acted in consideration of them. As the agrarian community declines, the sense of eternity, which could be obtained by locating oneself between the past and future generation, perishes. The universal religions may be able to provide an individual soul with eternity, but can never recover the generational continuity of the community. The nation can, however, for it contains not only the living but also the dead and the unborn.

It is worth noting that Kant lived precisely in the age mentioned by Anderson. On the one hand, Kant had to be a thinker of the Enlightenment, since the old religious order continued to reign in Germany. On the other hand, however, he encountered the prevalence of the imaginary recovery of the community which had been destroyed by the Enlightenment in Romantic nationalism, epitomized by Herder's notion of the *Volk* who share German language and culture. The fact that Kant acutely contested this current of nationalism in his later years has been neglected. Kant's harsh critique of Herder and Fichte, no doubt, has been attracting sufficient interest, but it has never been read as a critique of their nationalism, despite the fact that Kant gradually clarified his position as a cosmopolitan. Although it is possible to say that Kant's later works can be integrated into his idea

of “perpetual peace,” this does not mean that he shifted his interest from metaphysical questions to actual questions of politics. Rather, it means that he found a new theological metaphysics in questions that were seemingly actual and political. To the extent that Kant’s later works aimed at nations as transcendental illusions, they can be considered as sequels to the three *Critiques*. That nations are transcendental illusions implies that they are illusions based upon reason rather than sense-perception, and, therefore, cannot be overcome by intellectual enlightenment.

Nations are an imaginary recovery of reciprocal relations, which are distinct from the power relations of the state or the competitive relations of the market. In other words, the Romantics tried to solve the actual problems caused by the state and capital with such imaginary products (i.e., illusions) as the nation. In this case, it is no use criticizing the nations as an illusion, because there is a reality which compels human beings to need such illusions. Just as Marx claimed in his critique of religion, if you want to criticize an illusion, you must criticize the reality which compels human beings to need it, in order to show how to dissolve it practically. The Kantian moral law is a problem which is actual and economic, and to be realized in history. The society in which this law is realized is called “the kingdom of the end.” Kant’s project for perpetual peace is not a question of mere international politics. He regarded human history as a process of achieving the kingdom of the end or the “world republic.” Hence, it can be said that Kant’s world republic entails a situation in which the trinity of capital-nation-state is superseded. Reading only Kant’s works, however, does not clarify how his philosophy proceeds to the world republic. In *Transcritique*, I tried to elucidate Kant’s works through those of Marx, who was rather ungenerous with Kant. Conversely, this also meant that I tried to reread Marx’s works as a continuation of the Kantian critique. Still, I must admit that there are some important aspects missing from the transcritical reading of Kant and Marx: violence and aggressivity. Through a transcritical reading of Kant and Freud, I believe, these points can be brought to light.

Hegel regarded Kant’s project for perpetual peace as an abstract that relied upon human understanding or benevolence. Based upon the Hobbesian notion of the state, Hegel deemed a state which transcends other states to be impossible. Such an institution as Kant’s “League of Nations” would be powerless since it could not apply military sanctions against states that violate the international treaty. Ultimately, there must be a hegemonic state with sufficient power. Hegel saw world history as a stage on which states were contesting each other; the winner was called the “world-historical state.” Basically, thoughts similar to this Hegelianism have been dominant ever since the nineteenth century; their ideologues like the neo-conservatives in twenty-first century America have continuously derided

the Kantian project. Yet, Kant was not as naïve a thinker as Hegel assumed he was. Indeed, Kant insisted that it was possible for states to transcend the state of nature mutually and to attain the world republic, and that this process was programmed in human history by nature. At first glance, this appears to be an extremely optimistic view, but what is at stake for Kant becomes clearer in the following passage:

The means that nature uses to bring about the development of all of man's capacities is the **antagonism** among them in society, as far as in the end this antagonism is the cause of law-governed order in society. In this context, I understand antagonism to mean men's *unsocial sociability*, i.e., their tendency to enter into society, combined, however, with a thoroughgoing resistance that constantly threatens to sunder this society. This capacity for social existence is clearly embedded in human nature.²

Rather than benevolence or understanding, "unsocial sociability" as humanity (or human nature), as well as the wars or disasters it causes, lead to the League of Nations and ultimately the "world republic." Our experiences in the twentieth century endorse Kant's thinking. After the First World War the League of Nations was formed, and after the Second World War the United Nations. It is not human benevolence or understanding but the world wars, which were manifestations of "unsocial sociability," that actualized those institutions. As it were, nature actualized them. This Kantian view is called the "cunning of nature" in contrast to what Hegel called the "cunning of reason," for Kant, indeed, treats nature as a subject. This is not mere rhetoric. Kant's words here suggest that there is a kind of subjectivity in history distinct from the conscious subject. It is impossible to overcome Hobbesian mutual hostility with only human will and understanding. Rather, according to Kant, only something derived from hostility itself could overcome hostility. He called this something nature instead of reason.

As long as we remain within the frame of Kant's argument, however, it would be difficult to grasp the concrete significance of his thinking on nature, which is at the core of the possibility of perpetual peace. In order to fathom its depth, we need to refer to Freud, who was also ungenerous with Kant. I am certain that this reference will cast a new light on Kant's treatises upon perpetual peace and world history. This does not mean that I am proposing a psychoanalytic reading of Kant. On the contrary, reading Freud's theory of culture from a Kantian viewpoint could also cast a new light on Freud. In my former work I have called reading Kant through Marx and reading Marx through Kant "transcritique." In that sense, this essay can also be called a transcritical reading of Kant and Freud.

DEATH DRIVE

Freud propounded the notion of the superego in 1923 in *The Ego and the Id*. At first glance, the superego seems to paraphrase what he earlier referred to as the “censor of dreams” in his *The Interpretation of Dreams*. It seems possible to say that the superego is the “father,” or the social norm, which is internalized as a result of the Oedipus complex. It should be noted, however, that it was not until he introduced the notion of the death drive in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in 1920 that he posited the idea of the superego. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud observed symptoms in which unpleasurable and unwished for actions were repeated: cases in which patients of traumatic neurosis repeatedly dreamed abominable scenes of disasters, and a child repeated, in forms of play, unpleasurable scenes of being left behind by his mother. Freud speculated that this repetition compulsion stemmed from something primary and fundamental, which exceeded the pleasure principle. He called this excess the death drive. The death drive becomes aggressive when it is turned outward. By turning this aggressive drive inward, according to Freud, the superego is formed. The “censor” comes from without insofar as it is the internalization of the norms of parents or society. For its part, the superego arises from within. While the censor is heteronomous, the superego is autonomous.

Generally speaking, however, even after the introduction of the death drive, the superego has been considered as an internalization of social norms. In *Negative Dialectics*, for example, Adorno attempted to use Freud to criticize Kant’s “practical reason.” He claimed that Kant neglected the process by which the moral law was founded and instead treated it as noumenal. Adorno writes:

No Kant interpretation that would object to his formalism and undertake to have the substance demonstrate the empirical moral relativity which Kant eliminated with the help of that formalism—no such interpretation would go far enough. The law, even in its most abstract form, is something that has come to be [or to existence]; its painful abstractness is sedimented substance, dominion reduced to its normal form of identity. Psychology has now concretely caught up with something which in Kant’s day was not known as yet, and to which he therefore did not need to pay specific attention; with the empirical genesis of what, unanalyzed, was glorified by him as timelessly intelligible. The Freudian school in its heroic period, agreeing on this point with the other Kant, the Kant of the Enlightenment, used to call for a ruthless criticism of the super-ego as something truly heteronomous and alien

to the ego. The super-ego was recognized, then, as blindly, unconsciously, internalized social coercion.³

Adorno, then, conceived of Freud's notion of the superego as an internalization of social norms. Consequently, the critique of Kant based upon Freud is directly followed by critique of Freud himself. "As soon as it puts the brakes of social conformism on the critique of the super-ego launched by itself, psychoanalysis comes close to that repression which to this day has marred all teachings of freedom. . . . A critique of the super-ego would have to turn into one of the society that produces the super-ego."⁴

However, Freud put forward the notion of the superego precisely because within it there was a new thinking that was completely distinct from his previous theories. If, as Adorno held, the superego was merely internalization of the father or social norms, the "censor" would have been more appropriate. In the superego, Freud found more positive functions than in the censor. This new thinking is indicated in his 1928 essay on humor. Although Freud had treated it in *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, humor had only been mentioned in a small section of the last chapter in the book. There, he makes only a simple distinction between jokes, the comic, and humor: "the pleasure in jokes has seemed to us to arise from an economy in expenditure upon inhibition, the pleasure in the comic from an economy in expenditure upon ideation (upon cathexis) and the pleasure in humour from an economy in expenditure upon feeling."⁵ In the short essay titled "Humour," however, Freud sought a more fundamental difference between humor and jokes. Concerning humor, Freud refers to an example of the "criminal . . . being led out to the gallows on a Monday," who remarks "Well, this week's beginning nicely."⁶ This might simply sound like the criminal refusing to accept reality, but those who hear his words, which in humor are sincere, are provided with a kind of pleasure which could not be found in a simple repudiation.

Humour possesses a dignity which is wholly lacking, for instance, in jokes, for jokes either serve simply to obtain a yield of pleasure or place the yield of pleasure that has been obtained in the service of aggression . . . We obtain a dynamic explanation of the humorous attitude, therefore, if we assume that it consists in the humorist's having withdrawn the psychical accent from his ego and having transposed it on to his super-ego. To the super-ego, thus inflated, the ego can appear tiny and all its interest trivial; and, with this new distribution of energy, it may become an easy matter for the super-ego to suppress the ego's possibilities of reacting. . . . A joke is thus the contribution made to the comic by the unconscious. In just the same way, *humour would*

be the contribution made to the comic through the agency of the super-ego. In other connections we knew the super-ego as a severe master. It will be said that it accords ill with such a character that the super-ego should condescend to enabling the ego to obtain a small yield of pleasure. It is true that humorous pleasure never reaches the intensity of the pleasure in the comic or in jokes, that it never finds vent in hearty laughter. It is also true that, in bringing about the humorous attitude, the super-ego is actually repudiating reality and serving an illusion. But (without rightly knowing why) we regard this less intense pleasure as having a character of very high value; we feel it to be especially liberating and elevating.⁷

Here Freud sees the superego not as the agency of repression and censorship but as that which, “in humour, speaks such kindly words of comfort to the intimidated ego.”⁸ This new notion of the superego cannot be found in *Jokes*. Needless to say, the change occurred through *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The superego derives not from the outside by way of the father or social norms, but from the inside; it was discovered as that which brought about effects which could be regarded as autonomous. Rather, the death drive was discovered to be that which brings about the superego.

Although Freud’s discovery of the active function of the superego, compared to the negativity of the “censor,” seems to be a critical turn, it can be said that this turn is a further radicalization of the other turn with which psychoanalysis was established as such. The first turn took place when Freud, who had argued in *Studies on Hysteria* that the cause of hysteria was sexual traumas, that is, seductions by adults, denied his own argument in the very next year. According to his new view, the memory of traumatic experiences that the patient retains is a fiction he or she retrospectively invents. What is concealed by this memory is the childhood past in which the patient actively tried to realize his or her desire. It goes without saying that it is at this time that Freud proposed the concept of the Oedipus complex. At the same time, he also proposed the concept of the libido. This does not mean that human beings are subject to the libido. On the contrary, Freud introduced the concept in order to stress that a child was active as a subject of desire, even though the child was not a subject of consciousness. That is to say, what is at stake in Freud’s concept of the libido is his project to locate active subjectivity in the dimension where there is no subject of consciousness. At this point, psychoanalysis was established. On the same ground, the notion of the death drive was introduced; in this sense the death drive is a development of Freud’s early theory, rather than a turn from it. Indeed, Freud began to refer to libido as life instincts when he started using the notion of the death drive. In short, the notion of the

drive was proposed as that which could bear witness to active subjectivity on a level that was not consciousness. The superego in humor, for example, functions with spontaneity and activeness, but not with consciousness. If it functioned consciously, it would not be humor but irony and simple repudiation.

The following is clear: the superego was not conceived as a consequence of the notion of the death drive. On the contrary, Freud postulated the death drive precisely in order to demonstrate the autonomous superego, through which the drive could inhibit itself. Taking the superego into consideration, aggressivity can be seen as a part of the death drive. It is an inward aggressivity that can inhibit externalized aggressivity. If so, it follows that we are provided with a new perspective in which it is not impossible to control aggressivity.

FREUD AND WAR

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud addresses the theory of the death drive as a cultural theory. Repudiating the German tradition which distinguished between civilization and culture, he basically regarded culture as the superego, defining it in various ways. Culture, however, is not internalized social norms. It comes, as it were, from the inside. Instead of the traditional Romantic view that culture (or the superego) repressed the id (or the pleasure principle), on the basis of the reality principle, Freud held that culture was derived from the death drive. Generally speaking, Freud's cultural theory is deemed to be an application of psychoanalysis. Indeed, even before *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Freud had applied psychoanalysis to cultural problems. However, it is impossible to see *Civilization and Its Discontents* as an application of the theory of the death drive. We can speak of the death drive only in terms of cultural theories. *Civilization and Its Discontents* is not a psychoanalytic explanation of a historical situation, but, on the contrary, a statement of the fact that psychoanalysis is situated in history. When Freud insists that it is only the superego as the inwardly aggressive drive, only the sense of guilt, which can inhibit the aggressive drive, his words should be read in the context of the particular historical situation of postwar Germany.

Nevertheless, we must argue that the death drive is a concept that is produced from within psychoanalytic experience. Freud denies that the death drive originates in an historical event such as the First World War. In fact, by referring to the cases of children and traumatic neurosis, he dehistoricizes

it. The death drive is a theoretical development from his experience in psychoanalytic treatment. Certainly this is true, for his thinking on the death drive cannot be anticipated from reading his essay on war and death written during the war. In 1915 Freud wrote the following:

We cannot but feel that no event has ever destroyed so much that is precious in the common possession of humanity, confused so many of the clearest intelligences, or so thoroughly debased what is highest. Science herself has lost her passionless impartiality; her deeply embittered servants seek for weapons from her with which to contribute towards the struggle with the enemy. Anthropologists feel driven to declare him inferior and degenerate, psychiatrists issue a diagnosis of his disease of mind or spirit. Probably, however, our sense of these immediate evils is disproportionately strong, and we are not entitled to compare them with the evils of other times which we have not experienced.⁹

While Freud admits the fact that the First World War brought disillusionment to Europeans, he is distinctly unsympathetic with their plight. He argues that they are disillusioned because they have an illusion which they should not have had in the first place. The morality and civilization that modern Europeans believe to be superior to those of other races are mere illusions. Freud writes: “in the last resort it may be assumed that every internal compulsion which makes itself felt in the development of human beings was originally—that is, in the *history of mankind*—only an external one.”¹⁰ The moral conscience of an individual is social anxiety and nothing else. In war the external compulsion is removed. “[War] strips us of the later accretions of civilization, and lays bare the primal man in each of us. It compels us once more to be heroes who cannot believe in their own death; it stamps strangers as enemies, whose death is to be brought about or desired.”¹¹ In short, if we know that there is no significant difference between the civilized and the primitive, we would not have to be disillusioned.

Having in this way once more come to understand our fellow citizens who are now alienated from us, we shall much more easily endure the disappointment which the nations, the collective individuals of mankind, have caused us, for the demands we make upon these should be far more modest. Perhaps they are recapitulating the course of individual development, and to-day still represent very primitive phases in organization and in the formation of higher unities. It is in agreement with this that the educative factor of an external compulsion towards morality, which we found was so effective in individuals, is as yet barely discernible in them.¹²

This view, however, is not original to Freud. He writes the following:

[S]tudents of human nature and philosophers have long taught us that we are mistaken in regarding our intelligence as an independent force and in overlooking its dependence on emotional life. Our intellect, they teach us, can function reliably only when it is removed from the influence of strong emotional impulses; otherwise it behaves merely as an instrument of the will and delivers the inference which the will requires. . . . Psycho-analytic experience has, if possible, further confirmed this statement.¹³

That is to say, according to Freud's thinking in this period, war reveals the emotional life which is ordinarily repressed by the state. "[T]he logical bedazzlement which this war has conjured up in our fellow-citizens, many of them the best of their kind, is therefore a secondary phenomenon, a consequence of emotional excitement, and is bound, we may hope, to disappear with it."¹⁴

In *Civilization and Its Discontents* Freud was antagonistic to the dominant current of thought, which, denying culture, argued for a return to nature, a return to "life." In "Thoughts for the Time on War and Death," however, he is more or less in consonance with the contemporary philosophy of life. For example, he argues that, although we accept death as unavoidable, "our unconscious . . . does not believe its own death." Thus, he concludes:

[W]ar cannot be abolished; so long as the conditions of existence among nations are so different and their mutual repulsion so violent. There are bound to be wars. The question then arises: Is it not we who should give in, who should adapt ourselves to war? Should we not confess that in our civilized attitude towards death we are once again living psychologically beyond our means, and should we not rather turn back and recognize the truth? Would it not be better to give death the place in reality and in our thoughts which is its due, and to give a little more prominence to the unconscious attitude towards death which we have hitherto so carefully suppressed? This hardly seems an advance to higher achievement, but rather in some respects a backward step—a regression; but it has the advantage of taking the truth more into account, and of making life more tolerable for us once again. To tolerate life remains, after all, the first duty of all living beings. Illusion becomes valueless if it makes this harder for us. We recall the old saying: *Si vis pacem, para bellum*. If you want to preserve peace, arm for war. It would be in keeping with the times to alter it: *Si vis vitam, para mortem*. If you want to endure life, prepare yourself for death.¹⁵

What Freud says here is ambiguous. Although he considers war as folly, he also affirms, albeit halfheartedly, our adaptation to it. We can act in war without fear of death because we assume the unconscious attitude toward death, and, thus, we believe in our own immortality. Rather than clinging to various civilized devices, which have been produced in order to avoid confronting death, Freud suggests, it might be better for us to abandon them and return to the unconscious attitude. In other words, although human beings recognize death as an inevitable fact, this recognition is itself a refuge from death. War sends human beings back to the state of existence prior to the introduction of civilized or intellectual devices, to which we must return. This view appears to be shared by Heidegger, who grasps the authenticity of human beings in "Being-towards-death." That is to say, in opposition to the then prevalent neo-Kantian philosophy of "intellect," Freud had an affinity with the philosophy of life. He pointed to the limit of intellect in the Enlightenment and retained the position of Romanticism.

The Romanticism of psychoanalysis can be inferred from Freud's relationship with Jung. A number of Freud's disciples, including Jung, deserted him because of their repulsion for his theory of the sexual drive. Without the theory of the sexual drive, however, psychoanalysis would simply be a form of Romantic thought. In fact, Jung seeks the origin of psychoanalysis in the thinkers and poets of Romanticism. In short, this is a dualism of consciousness and the unconscious, or reason and feeling. The unconscious is the drive that is repressed by reason and comes out through reason's censorship. It is true that the notion of the unconscious has been used since Romanticism; without using the term, similar theoretical apparatuses are repeated today in the form of cultural anthropology or semiotics.

Romanticism is often regarded as having an adolescent, subjective, and rebellious attitude, but, as is shown in the later Wordsworth (*The Prelude*) or Hegel (*The Phenomenology of Mind*), it does include criticism of itself. In Freud's terms, it is the whole process of "maturation" in which the pleasure principle is inhibited and the reality principle is admitted. According to Hegel, it is sickness that stunts mind's development and which persists in its lower phases. Basically Freud's early thinking is close to this Romanticism; his Romanticism is directly indicated by his words during the war quoted above: "[the collective individuals of mankind] represent very primitive phases in organization and in the formation of higher unities." Without the infant's sexual drive, therefore, Freud's thinking would not be able to avoid being reduced to Romanticism. It can be said that only by persisting with the sexual libido did Freud diverge from Romanticism. This does not mean that Freud adopted a mechanistic, biological viewpoint. On the contrary,

as I stated above, when he introduced the concept of the libido, Freud saw it as a source that could demonstrate an active subjectivity different from the conscious subject.

In 1914 Jung aired his differences with Freud and resigned as president of the International Psychoanalytic Association. The damage to Freud caused by Jung's desertion has been pointed to. The non-Jewish Jung had been the bulwark against the prejudice which the movement of psychoanalysis could have encountered because it had been fostered mainly by Jews. Jung's secession, however, is related to Freud's thoughts on the eve of the First World War. In the war, for example, most of the socialists, who belonged to the Second International, which was opposed to war, supported the war in their countries. Romantic nationalism had thus overwhelmed the reason of the Enlightenment. Jung stood in this current.

On the eve of the war, Jung broke away from Freud; it is not that Freud broke away from Jung. Freud himself, while viewing war as regression into savagery, simultaneously acknowledged its significance as a liberation of "life" and an existential awakening of individuals. Hence we must avow that Freud, up to this period, was a Romantic in the broadest sense. It is only when he renounced Romanticism, in the postwar *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, that Freud truly broke away from Jung. Freud describes the process leading to the break as follows. At first he had reflected on psychoneurosis in terms of dualistic conflict between the ego-drive and the sexual drive. When it was revealed that the ego-drive itself had a libidinal nature, however, it became impossible for him to uphold this traditional dualism. Then, like Jung, he would have had to subscribe to the opinion which does not limit the libido to the sexual but grasps it monistically. Concerning this problem, Freud states the following:

But we now find ourselves suddenly faced by another question. If the self-preservative instincts too are of a libidinal nature, are there perhaps no other instincts whatever but the libidinal ones? At all events there are none other visible. But in that case we shall after all be driven to agree with the critics who suspected from the first that psycho-analysis explains *everything* by sexuality, or with innovators like Jung who, making a hasty judgement, have used the word "libido" to mean instinctual force in general. Must not this be so? It was not our *intention* at all events to produce such a result. Our argument had as its point of departure a sharp distinction between ego-instincts, which we equated with death instincts, and sexual instincts, which we equated with life instincts. (We were prepared at one stage to include the so-called self-preservative instincts of the ego among the death instincts; but we subsequently corrected ourselves on this point and withdrew it.) Our views have from the very first been

dualistic, and to-day they are even more definitely dualistic than before—now that we describe the opposition as being, not between ego-instincts and sexual instincts but between life instincts and death instincts. Jung's libido theory is on the contrary *monistic*; the fact that he has called his one instinctual force "libido" is bound to cause confusion, but need not affect us otherwise.¹⁶

It is the apparatus of the Romantic dualism between the reality principle and the pleasure principle that Freud broke away from. It goes without saying, though, that his views became "even more definitely dualistic than before" as a result of this break. Whence, however, did Freud obtain the concept of the death drive? It does not come from within psychoanalytic theory, nor does it come from the experience of the war. He obtained it from patients suffering from war neurosis who he encountered in the practice of psychoanalysis. Despite the speculations of analysts, patients themselves introduced the historical situation. It is as a response to war neurotics' dreams of the "compulsion to repeat" that Freud developed the death drive. He had attempted to treat them as a problem of traumatic neurosis in general and to contain the historical situation of the First World War within psychoanalysis. Freud "admits" that he has had doubts about his own theory of dreams since the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

This would seem to be the place, then, at which to admit for the first time an exception to the proposition that dreams are fulfilments of wishes. Anxiety dreams, as I have shown repeatedly and in detail, offer no such exception. Nor do "punishment dreams," for they merely replace the forbidden wish-fulfilment by the appropriate punishment for it; that is to say, they fulfil the wish of the sense of guilt which is the reaction to the repudiated impulse. But it is impossible to classify as wish-fulfilments the dreams we have been discussing which occur in traumatic neuroses, or the dreams during psychoanalyses which bring to memory the psychical traumas of childhood. They arise, rather, in obedience to the compulsion to repeat, though it is true that in analysis that compulsion is supported by the wish (which is encouraged by "suggestion") to conjure up what has been forgotten and repressed.¹⁷

Yet, his admission simultaneously conceals another problem: why did Freud recall his doubt at this period? Considering his attitude as a scientist, having no scruples about changing his opinion, it is still strange that, especially at this period, he made a decisive and sudden turn in his opinion. Freud must have seen numerous cases of the repetition compulsion in dreams. While he had dismissed them as exceptions for a long time, why

couldn't he do the same in 1920? In a word, Freud faced the modern "war" for the first time in the dreams of war neurotics. In "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" he wrote as a non-combatant and for non-combatants.

The individual who is not himself a combatant—and so a cog in the gigantic machine of war—feels bewildered in his orientation, and inhibited in his powers and activities. I believe that he will welcome any indication, however slight, which will make it easier for him to find his bearings within himself at least. I propose to pick out two among the factors which are responsible for the mental distress felt by non-combatants, against which it is such a heavy task to struggle, and to treat of them here[.]¹⁸

Needless to say, I would not assert that only those who go to battlefields experience war. Freud held that, once war was over, most soldiers would return to everyday life and recover their intellect in place of the emotional excitement. However, the First World War was qualitatively different from any previous war: it produced a huge amount of neurotics who could not return to everyday life. Hence we might be able to say that the specificity of the war is revealed in their dreams. For example, war is absent in literature written during wartime. On the other hand, "post-war literature," of either world wars or the Vietnam War, is in the broad sense a literature of war neurosis. Even after its end, war is repeated in the nightmares of war neurotics. It is not the war as an observed fact, but the invisible war repeated in dreams that changed the framework of Freud's psychoanalysis.

Freud saw the aggressive drive as causing the repetition compulsion in the nightmares of war neurotics. The aggressive drive, however, is distinct from the aggressivity which we can observe in experience. The First World War was filled with such aggressivity. Freud himself, for instance, writes during the war: "the instinct which is said to restrain other animals from killing and devouring their species need not be attributed to [primateval man]."¹⁹ This view anticipates what Konrad Lorenz, an ethologist, later endeavored to discover. However, the Romantic opposition between animal and human, or between the primitive and the civilized—although its hierarchy is inverted—does not attend to the specific character of modern wars. Freud, witnessing the behavior of (civilized) Europeans in the First World War, commented that war "strips us of the later accretions of civilization, and lays bare the primal man in each of us," but this is perhaps unjust to primitive man, just as it is unjust to beasts to call those men who commit cruelties beastly. In all ages professional warriors or soldiers neither fight a war without promise of victory nor press the defeated too hard unnecessarily: the aggressivity in human beings is also inhibited

sufficiently. Consequently, the uninhibited carnage is never due to the “primitive mind” but to something specific to the First World War. It is the first war waged as an all-out war. Distinguished from previous wars, which involved only battles of arms, all-out war is violent, severe, and lengthy. The states not only fight battles of arms but also motivate all their cultural, political, economic, ideological, and military forces. This war has a decisive significance for the economy and for the people’s political and ideological solidarity. That is to say, in this national war, in which all forces are concentrated, it does not make sense to distinguish between soldier and civilian, between military and economic affairs, or perhaps between war and peace.

In the midst of the war, Freud expected that the people’s emotional excitement would eventually calm down. This is a viewpoint that sees war in its classical sense. And yet he could not avoid reading in war neurotics that this war was different from previous ones. To be sure, he never objectified the difference of the war. Nevertheless, Freud, who had theretofore assumed an ahistorical stance, confronted the historicity of the First World War in war neurotics. We must, therefore, read the death drive as an historical concept.

In *Civilization and Its Discontents* Freud points out the prevalence of the “hostility to civilization.” This is a social tendency which could be found before the First World War, and was occasionally called the “philosophy of life,” but was basically an anti-intellectual and Romantic tendency. In opposition to the force of cultural order, for example, Georges Sorel, affirmed violence as an affirmation of “life,” which countered its power. When the war broke out, socialists who valued an intellectual and abstract cosmopolitanism decided to enter the war at once. It is impossible to see this phenomenon only in terms of national interest. Neither the socialists themselves, nor the peoples, could resist the attraction of war’s aggressivity. Freud himself was attracted to it to a certain degree.

In postwar Germany, however, the “hostility to civilization” had another meaning: it was nothing but the hostility to the Treaty of Versailles and the regime of the Weimar Constitution. From the viewpoint of the Nazis, the regime was a humiliating order vindictively imposed upon the German people by the victorious nations; from the viewpoint of the communist party, it was a fraudulent order hampering the true proletarian revolution. In other words, the postwar Weimar regime was a culture imposed from the outside and a state of neurosis caused by repression. As a result, the Weimar regime collapsed under attacks from both the right and the left. When Freud wrote *Civilization and Its Discontents*, the Weimar regime was on the verge of collapse. What Freud implicitly maintains in this book is that the postwar order should be regarded not as an internalization of a

compulsion from the outside, but as a displacement of the German people's aggressive drive onto themselves. He argues that "the community, too, evolves a super-ego."²⁰ The Weimar regime is precisely the superego, which we equate with culture. The people thought that the Weimar regime was a repressive system inflicted upon a defeated Germany by the victorious nations. It is from this viewpoint that the Nazi's propaganda that the German race was castrated by the Allies, behind whom lurked the Jews, worked effectively. From the viewpoint of the early Freud, it would be impossible to contest this propaganda, for culture was certainly repression.

However, Freud, after *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, albeit uncomfortably, attempted to reinforce culture, or the superego. It is not external control, but the aggressive drive itself that can inhibit the aggressive drive. By this thinking, he insisted on the necessity of maintaining the Weimar regime. It should be noted, however, that it was not the war itself but the patients who repeated the war every night that compelled Freud to take a drastic turn that changed the meaning of the superego and culture. Freud speculated that individuals should be cured of neurosis, but that states did not have to be cured of neurosis, namely culture.

KANT'S SUBLIME AND FREUD'S SUPEREGO

A parallel can be found between Freud and Kant in the shifts that occur between their early and later works, especially those concerning humor and the sublime. As stated above, although Freud did not pay enough attention to humor in 1905 when he wrote *Jokes*, in 1928 he considered humor as fundamentally different from jokes. This turn was caused by the notions of the death drive and the superego. To repeat, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud observed the fact of the repetition of essentially unpleasurable acts which should have been avoided: the case of a child who overcame the unpleasurable situation of his mother's absence by repeating it in play. Here Freud saw the "beyond" of the pleasure principle. We can say, however, that what he saw here is the autonomous (that is, self-legislative) function of the superego, which consoles the poor ego. For this reason, the concepts of the death drive and the superego are inseparable.

Yet, it is Kant in *Critique of the Power of Judgment* who investigated the conversion of unpleasure into a kind of pleasure for the first time. There, he distinguishes between the beautiful and the sublime. Before the *Critiques*, he had dealt with them in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, in which he merely described his observations of the types of taste formed in this era.

The sight of a mountain whose snow-covered peak rises above the clouds, the description of a raging storm, or Milton's portrayal of the infernal kingdom, arouse enjoyment but with horror; on the other hand, the sight of flower-strewn meadows, valleys with winding brooks and covered with grazing flocks, the description of Elysium, of Homer's portrayal of the girdle of Venus, also occasion a pleasant sensation but one that is joyous and smiling. In order that the former impression could occur to us in due strength, we must have a feeling of the sublime, and, in order to enjoy the latter well, a feeling of the beautiful. Tall oaks and lonely shadows in a sacred grove are sublime; flower beds, low hedges and trees trimmed in figures are beautiful. Night is sublime, day is beautiful.²¹

The difference between the beautiful and the sublime, here, is only that of objects, or feelings. Kant certainly points out that the sublime is possible only through unpleasure, but such a notion had already been put forward by Edmund Burke. The emotion of the sublime is "not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror."²² At this stage, Kant's aesthetics assumed a position that explained the beautiful and sublime, in Freud's words, in terms of the "pleasure principle."

This is convincing proof that, even under the dominance of the pleasure principle, there are ways and means enough of making what is in itself unpleasurable into a subject to be recollected and worked over in the mind. The consideration of these cases and situations, which have a yield of pleasure as their final outcome, should be undertaken by some system of aesthetics with an economic approach to its subject-matter. They are of no uses for *our* purpose, since they presuppose the existence and dominance of the pleasure principle; they give no evidence of the operation of tendencies *beyond* the pleasure principle, that is, of tendencies more primitive than it and independent of it.²³

Freud's critique here is directed toward his own early theories, which saw dreams as wish-fulfillments and forcibly explained away even unpleasurable dreams as such. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he endeavors to explain dreams of the repetition compulsion in terms of an inclination different from the pleasure principle. His move parallels that of Kant, who at first saw the sublime from the viewpoint of the aesthetics of the pleasure principle, but later held it to be in principle different from the beautiful.

According to Kant, judgment of the beautiful is caused by finding the form of "purposiveness without purpose" in a natural object. In this case, the beautiful has its ground in the external object and imagination works together with understanding. On the other hand, the sublime emerges

when we cannot find such purposiveness but still try to find another kind of purposiveness: judgment of the sublime is caused by the imagination working together with *reason*. When, for instance, we are confronted with nature, which absolutely overwhelms us in its magnitude or its intensity, when in spite of our powerlessness the “supersensible faculty in ourselves” is aroused, the feeling of the sublime emerges. In short, while the beautiful has an external ground, the sublime’s ground is internal and projected onto external objects. As Freud differentiated a kind of pleasure in humor from that of jokes and indicated the superego’s involvement in humor, Kant also pointed out that reason was involved with the pleasure of the sublime. Kant says:

The **quality** of the feeling of the sublime is that it is a feeling of displeasure concerning the aesthetic faculty of judging an object that is yet at the same time represented as purposive, which is possible because the subject’s own incapacity reveals the consciousness of an unlimited capacity of the very same subject, and the mind can aesthetically judge the latter only through the former.²⁴

Kant’s thinking here is analogous to Freud’s on humor: the revelation of a self with unlimited capacity encourages the powerless self. Freud’s example of the child, who converts the pain of being left behind by his mother into pleasure by play that repeatedly represents the pain, shows, in Kant’s words, that “an unlimited capacity” of the subject can be “aesthetically” judged only through the same “subject’s own incapacity.”

Can we then insist that the sublime is derived not from external objects but from the inside? Without an external object, however, with such an overwhelmingly formidable power as to make us feel powerless, there would be no sublime. Without reason, which overcomes the powerlessness, no doubt, there would be no sublime; otherwise it would be religious fear and far from yielding pleasure. The sublime, however, is not a mere subjective feeling. The sublime is impossible without the existence of the overwhelming external object. The same logic can be applied to Freud’s concept of the superego. I stressed that the superego is derived from the inside, but my proposition does not deny that the superego is derived from the outside. Freud argued that conscience is formed not by the severe and superior (that is, external) other, but by a renunciation of one’s own aggressivity, of which psychic energy passes into the superego and is wielded on the ego. Simultaneously, he insisted that this view was compatible with his former view.

Which of these two views is correct? The earlier one, which genetically seemed so unassailable, or the newer one, which rounds off the theory in

such a welcome fashion? Clearly, and by the evidence, too, of direct observations, both are justified. They do not contradict each other, and they even coincide at one point, for the child's revengeful aggressiveness will be in part determined by the amount of punitive aggression which he expects from his father. Experience shows, however, that the severity of the super-ego which a child develops in no way corresponds to the severity of treatment which he has himself met with. The severity of the former seems to be independent of that of the latter. A child who has been very leniently brought up can acquire a very strict conscience. But it would also be wrong to exaggerate this independence; it is not difficult to convince oneself that severity of upbringing does also exert a strong influence on the formation of the child's super-ego.²⁵

For Freud the superego is ambiguous. What is new after *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, however, is his attempt to explicate the autonomy of the superego through the concept of the death drive. Despite his attempts to explain it in biological metaphors, needless to say, he could not be satisfied with them. At the same time, he could not help being perplexed to find that, avoiding biology, his argument had become speculative and metaphysical. The concept of the death drive, in fact, has been repudiated by many schools of psychoanalysis, with the exception of the Kleinians who read it as a biological entity.

It may be asked whether and how far I am myself convinced of the truth of the hypotheses [of the death drive] that have been set out in these pages. My answer would be that I am not convinced myself and that I do not seek to persuade other people to believe in them. Or, more precisely, that I do not know how far I believe in them. There is no reason, as it seems to me, why the emotional factor of conviction should enter into this question at all. It is surely possible to throw oneself into a line of thought and to follow it wherever it leads out of simple scientific curiosity, or, if the reader prefers, as an *advocatus diaboli*, who is not on that account himself sold to the devil. I do not dispute the fact that the third step in the theory of the instincts, which I have taken here, cannot lay claim to the same degree of certainty as the two earlier ones—the extension of the concept of sexuality and the hypothesis of narcissism. These two innovations were a direct translation of observation into theory and were no more open to sources of error than is inevitable in all such cases. It is true that my assertion of the regressive character of instincts also rests upon observed material—namely on the facts of the compulsion to repeat. It may be, however, that I have overestimated their significance.²⁶

Neither primary masochism nor the death drive, are ever empirical concepts. While aggressivity is a notion which can be readily obtained from

the observation of war, the aggressive drive is a postulate which can be obtained solely from the nightmares of war neurosis. Still, to postulate the aggressive drive, and its derivative the death drive, is not a reintroduction of metaphysics. While he tenaciously adhered to the physical, Freud encountered in it the inevitability of the metaphysical as *drive*. Nevertheless, it is not that the metaphysical exists independently of the physical. For example, he states the following:

[T]he most interesting methods of averting suffering are those which seek to influence our own organism. In the last analysis, all suffering is nothing else than sensation; it only exists in so far as we feel it, and we only feel it in consequence of certain ways in which our organism is regulated.

The crudest, but also the most effective among these methods of influence is the chemical one—intoxication. I do not think that anyone completely understands its mechanism, but it is a fact that there are foreign substances which, when present in the blood or tissues, directly cause us pleasurable sensations; and they also so alter the conditions governing our sensibility that we become incapable of receiving unpleasurable impulses. The two effects not only occur simultaneously, but seem to be intimately bound up with each other. But there must be substances in the chemistry of our own bodies which have similar effects, for we know at least one pathological state, mania, in which a condition similar to intoxication arises without the administration of any intoxicating drug.²⁷

From this description it is evident that Freud anticipated the discovery of endorphins. Brain physiology today has been developing in the direction Freud foresaw. Why can pleasure be obtained through unpleasure? It is because endorphins are secreted when ordinary pleasure is frustrated. A runner's high, for instance, occurs after the state of suffering. Since antiquity, religious ascetics have known this art of conversion, these techniques of the body. Certainly they have regarded those techniques as metaphysical "ecstasy," but, even if they soar into heaven, there is no "mystery" in mysticism without the chemical ground. Religious mysticism is different from narcotics, in that while the former causes the secretion of endorphins by intentional sufferings, the latter adds them from the outside. Marx said that "religion is the opium of the people," but for Freud it was not a metaphor. He argues that "the effect of religious consolation may be likened to that of a narcotic."²⁸ Incidentally, there are two main types of narcotic. One type, such as amphetamines or cocaine, directly supplies dopamine. The other type, such as opium or heroin, functions in the same way as the endorphins: they affect the receptor which inhibits the activity of the nervous system and consequently yields pleasure. Therefore, while the former

compels people to act, often aggressively, the latter causes the calm pleasure of nirvana, and puts people into, as it were, an “inorganic” state. We can also find these two types in religious mysticism.

This view provides us with a physical ground for the conversion of unpleasure into pleasure. Probably Freud would not repudiate it. Kant, too, would not repudiate it, for, as is shown by the “third antinomy,” the proposition that everything has a cause in nature is compatible with the fact of freedom. Kant repudiated not only eudaemonism but also the inclination to seek suffering, because erotic elements often appeared in actively seeking the pleasure brought about by the pain of following the moral law. Religious enthusiasm and ecstasy, Marianism, and masochistic asceticism, in which the devotees willingly suffer martyrdom, are apt examples. Freud calls this “moral masochism.” “[T]hrough moral masochism morality becomes sexualized once more, the Oedipus complex is revived and the way is opened for a regression from morality to the Oedipus complex. This is to the advantage neither of morality nor of the person concerned. An individual may, it is true, have preserved the whole or some measure of ethical sense alongside of his masochism; but, alternatively, a large part of his conscience may have vanished into his masochism.”²⁹ Similarly Kant not only repudiated empirical eudaemonism but also “mysticism,” which he saw as the pursuit of the suffering/pleasure which paradoxically results from the repudiation of the eudaemonism.

However, Freud saw Kant’s ethics in terms of the Oedipus complex. As he said, “Kant’s Categorical Imperative is thus the direct heir of the Oedipus complex.”³⁰ This view does not greatly differ from that of Émile Durkheim and the sociological thought of his followers, which, by regarding Kant’s “categorical imperative” as the norms of the community, assumed that Kant’s subjective ethics could be translated into a “social fact.” In a sense Freud’s earlier view is analogous to theirs. The later Freud, however, made a significant turn from this view, and if he had read Kant from his new viewpoint, a totally different Kant could have been revealed to him. Just as Adorno was satisfied with a stereotypical reading of Freud, however, so Freud was satisfied with a stereotypical reading of Kant. Hence we must read Kant against Freud. It is not until we see it from the viewpoint of the later Freud that the puzzle in Kant’s moral theory can be solved.

Kant indeed located morality in our obedience to an imperative, but he deemed it freedom because the imperative is constituted by ourselves, that is, *autonomously*. How is this possible? How can we understand it? There is an excellent example of what Kant calls autonomy, or following what one constitutes as the law: Freud’s case of the child, who overcomes the suffering of his mother’s absence by repeating a game. Autonomy is possible through a doubling of the ego between the ego and the superego.

This doubling is as different from the doubling of the empirical self and the transcendental self as chalk is from cheese. The latter yielded “Romantic irony,” exemplified by Schlegel, which dwells in transcendental subjectivity and denies the limitation of the ego in its empirical existence. It is a continual effort to negate the ego’s powerlessness at the level of experience. As a result, irony emerges as an attitude in which being serious is playful and being playful is serious. It is, however, merely an excessive self-consciousness. Hegel criticized Romantic irony because it stopped at the stage of subjectivity; human beings mature only by limiting themselves. Hegel thus seems to have overcome Romanticism. Yet, as we have already seen, his overcoming is also a form of Romanticism. On the contrary, Freud says that the superego is an unconscious agency from which humor is yielded. Freud insists: “not everyone is capable of the humorous attitude. It is a rare and precious gift, and many people are even without the capacity to enjoy humorous pleasure that is presented to them.”³¹ Humor is not produced by self-consciousness. Moreover, Freud asserts the following.

We may insist as often as we like that man’s intellect is powerless in comparison with his instinctual life, and we may be right in this. Nevertheless, there is something peculiar about this weakness. The voice of the intellect is a soft one, but it does not rest till it has gained a hearing. Finally, after a countless succession of rebuffs, it succeeds. This is one of the few points on which one may be optimistic about the future of mankind, but it is in itself a point of no small importance. And from it one can derive yet other hopes. The primacy of the intellect lies, it is true, in a distant, distant future, but probably not in an *infinitely* distant one.³²

Romanticism claims that intellect cannot defeat feeling or the drive. What Freud calls “intellect” here, however, is nothing like the intellect of the Enlightenment. It is a “soft” voice persistently muttered in the unconscious: the superego. The superego is an agency that actively and autonomously inhibits desire and the drive. Such is also what Kant calls “reason.”

THE CUNNING OF NATURE

Freud and Kant are similar in that both of them, in their later years, devoted themselves to the problem of “perpetual peace.” Nonetheless, sufficient attention has hardly been paid to this fact. Rather, it has been considered a peripheral and insignificant matter compared to their main work. Kant’s

theory of peace, indeed, did not become an issue in the nineteenth century, and yet, there is no doubt that, after the First World War, the following words became more persuasive.

[T]hrough wars, through excessive and never remitting preparation for war, through the resultant distress that every nation must, even during times of peace, feel within itself, they are driven to make some initial, imperfect attempts; finally, after much devastation, upheaval, and even complete exhaustion of their inner powers, they are driven to take the step that reason could have suggested, even without so much sad experience, namely, to leave the lawless state of savagery and enter into a federation of peoples [*Völkerbund*]. In such a league, every nation, even the smallest, can expect to have security and rights, not by virtue of its own might or its own declarations regarding what is right, but from this great federation of peoples (*Foedus Amphictyonum*) alone, from a united might, and from decisions made by the united will in accord with laws.³³

The League of Nations, established after the First World War, was powerless. From this experience the United Nations was founded, but it is also powerless and is consistently criticized as merely a measure by which the powerful nations achieve their own ends. It has to rely on the powerful nations with arms since its resolution cannot impose sanctions against violations. Critiques of the United Nations always result in critiques of Kant: it is nothing but “Kantian idealism” to imagine a resolution of an international conflict by the United Nations. This kind of argument is actually anticipated by Hegel, who criticized Kant’s “To Perpetual Peace.”

There is no Praetor to judge between states; at best there may be an arbitrator or a mediator, and even he exercises his functions contingently only, i.e., in dependence on the particular wills of the disputants. Kant had an idea for securing “perpetual peace” by a League of Nations [*Staatenbund*] to adjust every dispute. It was to be a power recognized by each individual state, and was to arbitrate in all cases of dissension in order to make it impossible for disputants to resort to war in order to settle them. This idea presupposes an accord between states; this would rest on moral or religious or other grounds and considerations, but in any case would always depend ultimately on a particular sovereign will and for that reason would remain infected with contingency.³⁴

Concretely, the “federation of peoples” is impossible without powerful nations which can use force in their sanctions against violations. According to Hegel, the hegemonic “world-historical nation” is necessary. This is,

indeed, the logic which brought about the two world wars and the Cold War, in the twentieth century. Against this Hegelianism, needless to say, Kant's theory of perpetual peace is powerless and may seem to be only a dream. Still, even if Kant was a dreamer, what he dreamed is not at all limited to such a league. For Kant's ideal of the world republic, the "federation of peoples" is only a "negative surrogate." Kant, rather, proposed it as a realistic compromise.

Reason can provide related nations with no other means for emerging from the state of lawlessness, which consists solely of war, than that they give up their savage (lawless) freedom, just as individual persons do, and, by accommodating themselves to the constraints of common law, establish a *nation of peoples* (*civitas gentium*) that (continually growing) will finally include all the people of the earth. But they do not will to do this because it does not conform to their idea of the right of nations, and consequently they discard in *hypothesis* what is true in *thesis*. So (if everything is not to be lost) in place of the positive idea of a *world republic* put only the *negative* surrogate of an enduring, ever expanding *federation* that prevents war and curbs the tendency of that hostile inclination to defy the law, though there will always be constant danger of their breaking loose.³⁵

This indicates that Kant's concept of the "federation" of nations is far from his ideal of the world republic, which entails the renunciation of the sovereignty of nations, namely the sublation of nations. Kant's theory of peace cannot be reduced to the problematics of international laws or politics. "Perpetual peace" is situated at the root of Kant's philosophy of history, for, in "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent," the formation of the world republic is referred to as the ideal to be achieved in the history of human species. "One can regard the history of the human species, in the large, as the realization of a hidden plan of nature to bring about an internally, and *for this purpose*, also an externally perfect national constitution, as the sole state in which all of humanity's natural capacities can be developed." Consequently, "A philosophical attempt to work out a universal history of the world in accord with a plan of nature that aims at a perfect civic union of the human species must be regarded as possible and even as helpful to this objective of nature's."³⁶ This "hidden plan of nature," however, is fraught with a material paradox: world peace, or, the world republic, according to Kant, is made possible not by human reason or the moral will but by "unsocial sociability," or the "antagonism" that is innate in human beings. The phrase, "a hidden plan of nature," is no more than rhetoric, but it is important to note that Kant calls it *nature* instead of *reason* or *mind*. I suggest that *nature* is a structure which we can and should analyze. It is

from Freud's insight about the relation between the death drive and reason, I believe, that we can gain the key to the structure.

The moral law, for Kant, is the categorical imperative. These words entice us to assume that the law is derived from the outside, whether it be from God or from parents. Consequently, many people read it as an internalization of external (or social) norms. Yet, according to Kant, the moral law is inside the soul. However, one cannot be ethical a priori. The moral law must be derived from the outside, but at the same time it must have its own root in the inside. Considering the example presented by Freud, it is not difficult to solve this antinomy. Although moral behavior is implanted from the outside by command or force, if everything is determined by the outside, it would remain merely heteronomous morality and, without external enforcement, would be abolished. In order for morals to be autonomous, they must come from the repetition compulsion: they must be derived, in one way or another, from the inside. The antinomy can thus be solved by considering what Kant refers to as the "antagonism" of innate human nature in terms of Freud's concept of the aggressive drive.

This problem would be vacuous, however, if it is solely considered within the realm of individual psychology. Freud's concept of the death drive emerged in a particular stage of history, in the situation of the First World War. The same can be said of Kant: he thought the problem of "practical reason" not within the framework of morality in a narrow sense, but on the level of history, economy, and politics.³⁷ At the base of his argument about peace, there is the "world" or "human species" in which the global economy of capitalism was actualized in reality.

[T]he effect that any national upheaval has on all the other nations of our continent, where they are all so closely linked by trade, is so noticeable that these other nations feel compelled, though without legal authority to do so, to offer themselves as arbiters, and thus they indirectly prepare the way for the great body politic [*Staatskörper*] of the future, a body politic for which antiquity provides no example. Although this body politic presently exists only in very rough outline, a feeling seems nonetheless to be already stirring among all its members who have an interest in the preservation of the whole, and this gives rise to the hope that, finally, after many revolutions of reform, nature's supreme objective—a universal *cosmopolitan state*, the womb in which all of the human species' original capacities will be developed—will at last come to be realized.³⁸

Kant points out that cosmopolitanism, or the tendency toward the "great body politic," cannot be found in "antiquity" and was caused by nations' being "so closely linked by trade." Kant, who had been a geographer all his

life, did not define the human species by a specific difference, such as reasoning, but saw it in the unity of peoples and races, and also in the permeation of the monetary economy. It is precisely the *exchange* enabled by the renunciation of violence, that is, the commodity economy, that concretely unites the human species. As Marx argued, the commodity economy appears between communities and is internalized in each community. Yet, what Kant did not see is the fact that the commodity economy proceeds only as capital's movement of its own accumulation. Contrary to Kant's hope, therefore, the capitalist economy makes mutual conflicts global. After pointing out that the human species is established in "world intercourse," and that it is not until then that "world history" is established, Marx states the following.

[O]nly with this universal development of productive force is a *universal* intercourse between men established, which produces in all nations simultaneously the phenomenon of the "propertyless" mass (universal competition), makes each nation dependent on the revolutions of the others, and finally has put *world-historical*, empirically universal individuals in place of local ones. Without this, (1) communism could only exist as a local event; (2) the *forces* of intercourse themselves could not have developed as universal, hence intolerable powers: they would have remained home-bred conditions surrounded by superstition; and (3) each extension of intercourse would abolish local communism. Empirically, communism is only possible as the act of the dominant peoples "all at once" and simultaneously, which presupposes the universal development of productive forces and the world intercourse bound up with communism.³⁹

This passage, written in 1848, reads as if it were written in 1989. It is due to the similarity between what was happening under the overwhelming dominance of British liberalism in the 1840s and under US neo-liberalism of the 1990s: the economies of nations, which theretofore had maintained their relative independence by national interventions, were forced into reformation of the division of labor and class in the global market economy. I quoted this passage, however, not in order to demonstrate how keen and pioneering Marx's insight was, but because I would like to remark that, notwithstanding the exactitude of his perception, his vision was too hasty.⁴⁰ From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, in fact, it is ridiculous to speak of world intercourse and world-historical individuals, who are enabled by the former, in 1848. Yet, we assume at each age that "the universal development of productive forces and world intercourse" has reached the final stage. For example, there were two so-called world wars in the twentieth century, but the First World War was, after all, that of Europe, and neither did the second extend all over the

world. The same can be said of the present. The situations after 1990 cannot yet be the final stage. In the future we will face situations which will make what is now taken seriously seem like merely a beginning in terms of “world history”; we might be forced to realize that something like the development of human society is a sheer illusion. Even so, looking back over the two hundred years since Kant’s death, I cannot help agreeing with the following words of Kant:

I will thus permit myself to assume that since the human race’s natural end is to make steady cultural progress, its moral end is to be conceived as progressing toward the better. And this progress may well be occasionally *interrupted*, but it will never be *broken off*. It is not necessary for me to prove this assumption; the burden of proof is on its opponents. . . .

One can also offer evidence showing that the cry over the irresistible growth in human depravity is due to the fact that, when man attains a higher stage of morality, one can see further still and can make more rigorous judgments regarding what man is in comparison with what he ought to be; consequently, our self-censure will always be the more rigorous the more stages of morality have been ascended in the known course of the world.⁴¹

CULTURE AND THE SENSE OF SHAME

From the perspective of Kant and Freud, the way to world peace can be found in culture, that is to say, in reinforcing the internalization of the aggressive drive. For Romanticism, however, culture is sickness as such. The problematic emerges in its most radical form in the defeated nations of the Second World War: Germany and Japan. Germany and Japan were not only forcibly democratized but also thoroughly demilitarized by the Allies. If war is a nation’s sovereignty, then renunciation of war also means the renunciation of sovereignty. This regime is forced and imposed by the victorious nations. It is not surprising, therefore, to hear the claim that the German or the Japanese people were castrated and deprived of their historical identity. In Germany, however, such revisionism is prohibited as unconstitutional discourse. It is prohibited neither because the atrocities by Nazi Germany were beyond any comparison nor because the criticisms from the outside are irritating. Rather, it is prohibited precisely because such a claim was vehemently asserted in the postwar Weimar regime, and was a factor in the rise of Nazism and the Second World War. Instead of healing the disease caused by the First World War, that claim simply intensified its symptoms.

We should reread Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* from this point of view. According to Adorno, Freud ceased his "ruthless criticism of the super-ego" after *Civilization and Its Discontents*. It was not from a desire to conform to the national system, though, that he stopped his criticism. Adorno, for instance, thus states:

Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may have been wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems. But it is not wrong to raise the less cultural question whether after Auschwitz you can go on living—especially whether one who escaped by accident, one who by rights should have been killed, may go on living. His mere survival calls for the coldness, the basic principle of bourgeois subjectivity, without which there could have been no Auschwitz; this is the drastic guilt of him who was spared. By way of atonement he will be plagued by dreams such as that he is no longer living at all, that he was sent to the ovens in 1944 and his whole existence since has been imaginary, an emanation of the insane wish of a man killed twenty years earlier.⁴²

Adorno's words correspond to what Karl Jaspers called "metaphysical guilt," which he added to criminal, political, and moral guilt when he investigated the phenomenon of war-guilt soon after the Second World War.⁴³ Besides this correspondence, however, Adorno's words are reminiscent of the war neurotics' nightmares of the repetition compulsion. We can ask Adorno the following questions: if it is the superego that forces the *sense of guilt* upon us, should we fight against it? If the nightmare is a compulsive repetition, can we simply be cured of it?

In Germany such a cure, that is, revisionism, is impossible. In Japan, on the contrary, it is always being claimed that the history written by the winners must be revised. What is mysterious, however, is the fact that such a claim has never become the dominant force in debate about Japanese national identity. It is evident that the constitution of postwar Japan, especially its ninth article, which declares the renunciation of war, was imposed by the occupying army. If this is true, why has the article never been amended? First of all, America itself, who imposed the constitution, demanded the remilitarization of Japan during the revolution in China and the Korean War. The Japanese government, however, refused to acquiesce. The refusal is not due to the excellent strategy of Shigeru Yoshida, the prime minister at the time, which aimed primarily at Japan's reconstruction of its economy, while entrusting its security to America. The Japanese government refused America's demand for remilitarization because it was apparent that an overwhelming majority of the people would reject the amendment of Article Nine. As a result, the Japanese government formed the Self-Defense

Forces (under the pretext that the forces would be limited to defense), and *de facto* revised the interpretation of the constitution gradually. However, the government still cannot insist on constitutional revisions at elections, for it is apparent that it would face vehement opposition. On the other hand, it is said that the pacifist constitution has been preserved due to leftist propaganda. This is also beside the point. It is unlikely that Marxists would support the policy of renouncing arms. The Communist Party, for example, considered postwar Japan to be obeying America as its colony, and insisted on the military struggle for national independence. Generally speaking, the postwar leftists opposed the military of bourgeois states, but affirmed the people's army. The majority of the New Leftists retained this inclination. In general, the postwar leftists attempted to exploit Article Nine rather than maintain it, for by doing so they could counter the conservatives to a certain degree, if only by mentioning its maintenance at elections. Accordingly, it is not because of the dominance of leftist ideology that the ninth article has survived. On the contrary, the Japanese leftists, too, have been ruled by *something* that upholds Article Nine.

This *something*, needless to say, inhabits the people, or the nation. It cannot be said, however, that it is situated in consciousness: it is not driven by rational persuasion or reflection. It is the superego as the unconscious. For example, Etō Jun, a literary critic, deemed that views such as those that claim the postwar Japanese Constitution was imposed by the US army of occupation cannot explain why the constitution so strongly determined the mind of the Japanese people. He then attempted to find the secret of the constitution's power in the meticulous and hidden "radical censorship" of the occupying army.

Moreover, the reality of this censorship was nothing but the extremely meticulous and hidden censorship which was practiced with the ban on the "reference to the censorship system." Metaphorically speaking, it seems as if Japanese are, concerning the Constitution, enclosed by this censorship system in a room all covered with mirrors. Looking from this side, this mirror is just a mirror and reflects nothing except our own faces, but, looking from the other side, namely from the side of the occupation authorities and the United States government, it is in fact clear glass—a device through which the inside of the room is tangibly exposed to detail.⁴⁴

This censorship is precisely the same as what early Freud described concerning the "censor of the dream." In other words, here Etō unwittingly follows the same logic as the early Freud. It is no wonder that he holds the Romantic view that the Japanese can be cured of the sickness when they are liberated from the repression. And yet, contrary to Etō's contention, it

was well known even at that time that the occupying army was practicing censorship. For example, every one knew that information on the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was extremely limited. Furthermore, the cases of censorship mentioned by Etō merely indicate the censors' folly and whim, and can never be called "meticulous and hidden" censorship.

By means of this kind of political manipulation, it is impossible to cause compulsive repetition in the Japanese people. The superego produced in the Japanese people seemed to be derived from the outside, from America, but it was not. The superego was produced from the inside: it was produced as a result of the aggressive drive which the people exerted to their hearts' content in the all-out war. Let us refer to Freud's words:

What means does civilization employ in order to inhibit the aggressiveness which opposes it, to make it harmless, to get rid of it, perhaps? . . . This we can study in the history of the development of the individual. What happens in him to render his desire for aggression innocuous? Something very remarkable, which we should never have guessed and which is nevertheless quite obvious. His aggressiveness is introjected, internalized; it is, in point of fact, sent back to where it came from—that is, it is directed towards his own ego. There it is taken over by a portion of the ego, which sets itself over against the rest of the ego as super-ego, and which now, in the form of "conscience," is ready to put into action against the ego the same harsh aggressiveness that the ego would have liked to satisfy upon other, extraneous individuals. The tension between the harsh super-ego and the ego that is subjected to it, is called by us the sense of guilt; it expresses itself as a need for punishment. Civilization, therefore, obtains mastery over the individual's dangerous desire for aggression by weakening and *disarming* it and by setting up a *court* [*Instanz*] within him to *watch over* it, like an *occupying army* [*Besatzung*] in a conquered city.⁴⁵

In this passage Freud seems to be speaking of the Japanese situation: an occupying army, (disarming, watching over) and a court (the Tokyo Tribunal). For Freud, however, the "occupying army" would not be that of America but precisely the aggressive drive of the Japanese people, who fought under the general mobilization. If the Japanese people have a "sense of guilt," it is not occasioned by the ruse of America or criticisms from the Asian peoples who were victimized by the Japanese aggressions. To be sure, the "sense of guilt" comes from the outside, but it cannot be maintained without that which comes from the inside, the repetition compulsion. Furthermore, the latter is more important. For example, it is difficult for the postwar generation to feel the sense of guilt. They reject any attempts to make them feel this guilt. The postwar generation, nevertheless, has supported the

war-renouncing Article Nine, not because of the sense of guilt, but because they sense that it is shameful not to be capable of inhibiting aggressivity by themselves. The superego is located in this *sense of shame*.

There are normal states or peoples without superegos. America, for example, temporarily possessed the sense of guilt after the Vietnam War, but was cured of the sickness by the Gulf War in 1991. Can we say, however, that the American people recovered their health? They merely obey another repetition compulsion, which is forced upon them by capitalism and nationalism. There will come a time when they will have to be thoroughly ashamed of this cure. The normal age, in which nations could, or believed that they could, wield their sovereignty, is already over. The power to inhibit the "state of nature" between nations is stronger than ever before. It is not that a certain ideal caused this situation, rather, it is the result of aggressivity being revealed on an unprecedented scale in the two world wars and the Cold War.

For Freud, culture or civilization is a social apparatus that autonomously inhibits aggressivity. In this regard, the investigations of Norbert Elias, who was influenced by Freud and studied the civilizing process from a sociological viewpoint, are suggestive. In *The Civilizing Process*, written in 1939, he closely examined the "civilizing process" in Western Europe from various angles. According to Elias, for instance, up until around the fifteenth or sixteenth century, people were brutal, belligerent, fought and very often killed each other, but gradually they abandoned their aggressive attitudes. This inhibition of aggressivity was not only caused by prohibition by the absolute monarchy, which monopolized violence, but also because the ruling class regarded the self-inhibition of aggressivity as a noble quality. Civilization consists not only in restraining aggressivity, but also in its being self-inhibiting.

Returning to Freud, it becomes evident that his thinking about the superego is concerned with the problematics of the civilizing process: how is it possible to spontaneously inhibit aggressivity? Parents can discipline children by using violence so that they can inhibit the aggressivity by themselves, but this discipline often results in raising violent persons. Conversely, as Freud pointed out, it is occasionally the case that children brought up by lenient parents have a strong ethical sense, that is, a superego. He explained this phenomenon in terms of the death drive, but it can be explained from another viewpoint. Even though they did not explicitly use force on their children, it is still possible to think that lenient parents produced the superego in them by showing by their own example that it is shameful to be incapable of self-inhibition. In this respect, it is important to note that Freud revised his earlier theory and insisted that a child's superego was not the parent himself, but formed upon the model of the parent's superego. The

parent's superego, which inhibits aggressivity, can be communicated to the child. Moreover, the revised theory of the superego makes it possible to assume that not only individuals but also groups can possess a superego.

Responding to Einstein's question of how to abolish war, Freud wrote that it was not enough only to form a league of nations which would limit the sovereignty of each nation, but that the civilizing process in which people develop a revulsion for warfare was also essential.

[To rebel against war] is not merely an intellectual and emotional repudiation; we pacifists have a *constitutional* intolerance of war, an idiosyncrasy magnified, as it were, to the highest degree. It seems, indeed, as though the lowering of aesthetic standards in war plays a scarcely smaller part in our revolt [*Auflehnung*] than do its cruelties.⁴⁶

Obviously many people insist that war is cruel and sinful. Repeated too often, however, their words result in provoking reactions from those who avow that war is pleasurable and heroic. What is necessary to repudiate war is the sense of revulsion to being involved in such a vulgar and brutal thing. It is not the sense of guilt but that of shame. Moreover, asserting that by this growth of civilization it is possible to attain a society in which war would be abolished, Freud concludes the correspondence with the following words: "By what paths or by what side-tracks this will come about we cannot guess. But one thing we *can* say: whatever fosters the growth of civilization works at the same time against war."⁴⁷

3

HISTORY AS MUSEUM

Okakura Kakuzō and Ernest Fenollosa

I

Japan's modernization during the Meiji era was undoubtedly Westernization. Not confining itself to Japan's political and legislative system, the tides of change extended into all categories of learning and the arts: besides obvious targets such as the study of Chinese medicine, Chinese-language literature and Buddhism, a vital ideological source for the Meiji Restoration—the study of national classics (*kokugaku*)—was expunged from the new university system. These subjects were accepted by universities only after they were reorganized according to modern Western academic methodologies.¹ Nevertheless, there has been one notable exception to this pattern: that of the visual arts. For example, when the Tokyo School of Fine Arts (*Tokyo Bijutsu Gakkō*) was established in 1899, it focused its curricula on the study of both Japanese and Eastern arts, although the school was later taken over by Western-style painters. This characteristic is all the more prominent when we contrast it to the Tokyo Music School (*Tokyo Ongaku Gakkō*), which completely omitted Eastern music from its very inception.²

However, this did not mean that only the visual arts were exempted from the wave of Westernization: the exceptionality of the field was actually brought into being by a certain American, Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), who originally came to Japan in 1878 as a philosophy teacher of Spencerian Social Darwinism and Hegelian thought. It was during his stay that he became convinced that something in Japanese art could overcome the modern West. Fenollosa, who considered Asian and Japanese art as standing on superior ground to the contemporary realist Western paintings that were all the rage in his era, undertook a project of recategorizing

and systematizing periods of Japanese art in a historical manner. His young student Okakura Kakuzō (1862–1913, also known as Okakura Tenshin), who was proficient in English, assisted Fenollosa with the project. It was with Okakura, who later became an appointed cultural bureaucrat, that Fenollosa established the Tokyo School of Fine Arts in 1899: thus the “traditionalists” especially dominated there from the very beginning. Yet this achievement does not answer why only the visual arts became accepted by modern institutions while other traditional disciplines and religions were rejected and held in contempt.

It is because, prior to Fenollosa’s involvement, Japanese paintings and folk arts and crafts had already received high acclaim in Europe. When *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints were introduced to Europe in the 1850s, Impressionist painters accorded them particular praise; during the 1867 Paris World Exposition, the many pieces presented by the Tokugawa Shogunate also made a great impression amongst the participants. The praise heaped onto Japanese paintings indicated the Impressionists’ attempt to overcome the deep crisis of representation in modern European painting, which occurred at the moment of the advent of photography, through Japanese *ukiyo-e* and other art objects. Thus a representation of “Japan” was forged out of these artistic products. Van Gogh, for instance, repeatedly wrote in his letters that he wanted “to see things as the Japanese do.” In the face of such enthusiasm, Oscar Wilde issued the following warning:

I know that you are fond of Japanese things. Now, do you really imagine Japanese people, as they are presented to us in art, have any existence? If you do, you have never understood Japanese art at all. The Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists . . . In fact the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people.³

The boom in Japanese arts and the *Japonisme* movement were not limited to the *ukiyo-e*. It was concerned with a general interest in artistic handicrafts from Japan: its defining moment was during the 1873 World Exposition held in Vienna, in which the Meiji government systematically exposed such handicrafts, furniture, and textiles to the world. This is without doubt *the* primary motivational force that gave birth to the Art Nouveau movement in Europe. However, it goes without saying that the interest in Japanese artistic products and the representation of Japan were limited only to Europe: in Japan, there was no such interest in these products since modern, Western oil paintings in the realist vein were far more fresh and captivating for the Japanese.⁴ Because of that, it was natural that

the Western-style painters who attempted to import these techniques and objects commanded influence.

Nevertheless, the traditionalists dominated the Tokyo School of Fine Arts. They won not because of the aesthetic praise traditional crafts received in Europe and America, but because of their commercial success. As a consequence of the success at the Vienna World Expo, the Japanese government shipped roughly 45,000 items to the 1878 Paris World Expo, which were fervently coveted to the last piece. For a country that had little to export other than raw silk, the impressive sales indicated that Japan could consider its art as, above all else, an export industry. Capitalizing on this point, Okakura the cultural bureaucrat consolidated hegemony over the Western-style artists. Nationalism in general comes into existence in the aesthetic consciousness: Japanese nationalism arose in the Edo Period with the national classics scholar Motoori Norinaga, who was the first to favor an aesthetic perspective—*mono no aware* (the sorrow of things)—over the mainstream intellectual and moral perspectives (derived from India and China). Yet in most cases, this nationalist sentiment remained within the realm of the Japanese's own self-consciousness. For instance, the proponents of national classics (*kokugaku*) extolled reading the *Tale of Genji* and other native pieces that could not have been read outside the country.

Unlike the *Tale of Genji*, Japanese visual art had been valorized first in the West before the Japanese extolled it. The recognition of the “other” in the Hegelian sense had already been achieved. The *ukiyo-e* was acknowledged in Japan because it was first appreciated in Europe. In some sense this is also what happened to animé and film produced in post-Second World War Japan. To wit, although Ozu Yasujiro was considered a popular filmmaker among the masses, he ultimately could not be considered a maestro of art in contemporary Japan. When novelists and film directors were compared, the latter were generally treated as less prestigious in the realm of art: similar to the case of the *ukiyo-e*, the fact that Ozu is viewed as a master aesthete is a result of his enthusiastic reception by French film critics.

Often considered a victory for the traditionalists, the establishment of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was not, therefore, attributable to the traditional qualities of the arts themselves, but rather a victory based on their favorable Western reception and their value in the art industry. Certainly, we must not forget that Okakura himself was driven out by the Westernizers who replaced his leadership less than a decade after the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was formed. Yet from that point on, the Western-style artists continued to be troubled by a fundamental contradiction: that avant-garde, anti-traditionalist artworks in Japan appeared as mere mimicry in the West, where conversely, art that returned to Japanese traditionalism instead was

considered innovative. This problem persists today. It is clear that most Western-style artists revered in Japan are not considered to be of any value in the West, while the Japanese who gained recognition abroad in one form or another are in fact those who returned to traditionalism; it is the precisely the “return” that makes them seem avant-garde.

We could say that similar phenomena can be observed in other fields. For instance, in literature, Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, Kawabata Yasunari, Mishima Yukio, and others—despite their renown as traditionalists in the West—originally began their careers as Westernized modernists: the traditional “turn” they took should be understood as less the result of nostalgia, but rather as a deliberate attempt to appear even more avant-garde. Furthermore, their image of traditional Japan was one based on perceptions in the West, and we must pay attention to the fact that such a trend began in the visual arts, not literature.⁵ As an aestheticized object, “Japan” was above all formed by the fine arts in a narrow sense, and its related discourses. Herein lies the importance of considering the peculiarity of art and its discursive formations in Meiji Japan. The case of Okakura Kakuzō thus exemplifies this paradigm aptly above all others.

Okakura was well aware of the commodification of art, and Japanese art's status as a commodity in the world market. Such a sharp awareness differentiated Okakura not only from the traditionalists and Western-style artists, but also from Fenollosa himself. Though Okakura rejected industrial capitalism throughout his career, he importantly maintained an extreme sensitivity toward the marketability of artworks. Okakura was clearly cognizant of the fact that the arts had become representative of Japan due to popular international circulation at the time.

That which best represents the spirit of our country is the fine arts. Whilst worthy of great esteem, our literature and religions have nothing but slight relevance within the country, by which they are insufficient towards inspiring the world. Only the fine arts of the highest caliber can become representative of Japan: literature and religion cannot be compared to the exquisite breadth and singularity of its influence. However, during the end of Tokugawa rule, an epoch struck by extreme social disturbance, arts which were traditionally passed down through the generations were either consigned to nonexistence, or were recklessly abandoned to the dustbins of wood splinters and wastepaper: their presence unrecognizable to the extent that one truly cannot overcome such grief.⁶

The question of “representation” was the key concern for Okakura. At the time of the genesis of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Okakura, who became the first headmaster at twenty-seven, forced out Fenollosa behind

the scenes. But this was not a fallout that resulted from problems in their personal relationship. In actuality, it was none other than Fenollosa who “discovered” traditional Japanese arts, and brought about a perspective that organized such art historically. Needless to say, the young Okakura admired Fenollosa. In the end, however, what gradually led him to reject Fenollosa, was precisely the question of “representation.” The Japanese arts were “represented” by the means employed by Fenollosa. In the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, Marx said the following regarding the relationship between smallholding peasants and Louis Bonaparte: “They cannot represent themselves, they must be represented. Their representative must at the same time appear as their master, as an authority over them.”⁷ Hoping that Japan could represent itself, Okakura had no choice but the rejection of Fenollosa, the “master.” However, Okakura was also aware that such self-representation, in the end, results in dependence upon the “representations” of others.

Again, it is said that Fenollosa believed that the key to overcoming the crisis of representation could be found in Japanese and Eastern paintings. However, Fenollosa differed from the European Impressionists who were content to consider “Japan” as a fictional entity. Influenced by the transcendentalism of Ralph Waldo Emerson during his stay in Boston, Fenollosa, who simply ignored differentiation between the East and the West, was, on a certain level, a cosmopolitan figure. He was moved when discovering the Grecian influence within the art of the Far East, specifically of Japan; he concentrated his passion in the systematic classification of Japanese and East Asian painting. There were concrete differences between Fenollosa and the Impressionists with regard to Japanese painting. For instance, Fenollosa found the main characteristic of Japanese painting to be “lines” which possessed clear contours, and encouraged painters to use these features. However, in reality, it was the so-called “School of Obscurists (*Mōrō-ha*)”⁸ that achieved great commercial success in America and other foreign markets. That is to say, the assessment of Japanese art predominant in the market came from the Impressionists. It is likely that the rift between Okakura and Fenollosa began to fester around this time. Without hesitation, Okakura cast his lot in with the arts that “sold” well. Fenollosa’s loss of influence indeed had very little to do with the struggles between the Western-style artists and the Traditionalists, but instead with the ebbs and flows of the world market.

Nevertheless, all of this cannot simply be reduced to a commercial problem. The point is that Okakura came to the realization that, above anything else, art was a field of discursive conflict. What Fenollosa brought about was the very capacity to see Japanese art as “Art.” In other words, art could not be treated as Art without a discourse of its own, which regards

itself as art. Although arts certainly existed in Japan up to this point, it was from Fenollosa that they were “discovered” as Art. Thus, it was from art academies and art museums that the discourses pertaining to the fine arts were organized. With great sensitivity—in a way different from Fenollosa—Okakura was conscious of how the fine arts formed a discursive field in which struggles occurred.

In actuality, the establishment of art academies and art museums roughly coincided with the promulgation of the Imperial constitution in 1889 and the opening of the Imperial parliament in 1890. While the last of the two garnered widespread attention due to its status as a modern political institution, the establishment of “Art” has not been considered as important as that of the constitution and parliament. Regardless of the content it houses, the art museum’s very form itself was, above all, formulated in the modern West in the second half of the 18th century. First, the museum publicized “knowledge” that had been previously monopolized by the privileged classes. Simultaneously, this process meant that the artworks were separated from the historical spaces that they had occupied until then, and were in turn inserted and arranged into other artificial spaces.

Secondly, the museum enabled the spatial exhibition of a temporal sequence: in other words, spatial arrangement became indicative of temporal development. For the first time ever, displaying a “history of painting” became possible within the space of the museum. However, the history of painting cannot be viewed apart from other histories. The modern creation called “world history” came into being via the same apparatus that gave birth to the “museum.” For example, the British Museum was formed through organizing objects collected by the British Empire from all over the world. It is in the same way the museum was created that Hegel’s philosophical system (which in and of itself is a world history of philosophy) was formed. His *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* begins with Africa, passing through China and India, and finally ends with Prussia. Of course, the end of history with Prussia signifies without opacity Hegel’s own nationalism. In truth, the treatise could have ended in any other locale, which probably would not have made a difference. Yet the “end of history” was also posited as the very “objective of history.” From this, we can see that the arrangement of world history determines the objective of world history, or its very ideal.

Most certainly, the British Museum was brought into being by British domination of the world market. Marx has mentioned this.

The further the separate spheres, which interact on one another, extend in the course of this development, the more the original isolation of the

separate nationalities is destroyed by the developed mode of production and intercourse and the division of labour between various nations naturally brought forth by these, the more history becomes world history.⁹

According to Marx, the German idealist philosophers “speculatively distorted” such a process so that “later history is made the goal of earlier history.”¹⁰ That is to say, Hegel’s “philosophy of world history” was based upon such perspectives. However, as I have already described, we should take note that such a historical disposition shares the same structure as that within the art museum. The view of “world history” as such becomes possible only through spatial arrangement in the museum; one cannot simply reject this arrangement. Marx, who criticized an idealist conception of world history, accomplished his main work in the British Museum.

The construct of world history as the modern “museum” has become an arena in which questions are raised as to whether or not historical events and things should enter such a museum, and, if they should, where to place such objects within it. Every nation possesses its own ethnocentrism. Yet that which should be called a cultural Eurocentrism has its ground in the museum and its internal spatial arrangement. Assuming this premise, then, resisting such a Eurocentrism consists not of rejecting the “museum” in a wholesale manner; rather, resistance is only possible through a radical recomposition of its internal arrangement. Okakura understood this. It is not simply a question of military and economic hegemony. By implementing the “rich country, strong army” policies, Meiji Japan attempted to secure a seat within the Eurocentric historical order. However, there was no way such an approach could overturn this arrangement: it simply thrust Japan into a scramble for its ranking within the order.

Okakura could see the importance of the museum because he perceived that the appreciation and the arrangement within the museum were not concerned purely with problems of fine art but with those of hegemony. Fenollosa was the one who transmitted Hegel’s views on “aesthetics,” though he did not necessarily share in the latter’s Eurocentrism. For him the “world spirit” which Hegel talked about could not be literally anything but a cosmopolitan position. To wit, in his main publication *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, Fenollosa treated Japanese art as influenced by ancient Greek and Pacific art. For Fenollosa, discovering the traces of influence from Grecian art in Japanese art was indeed a source of great joy. Yet on Okakura’s side, he probably saw a form of Eurocentrism lurking within Fenollosa’s cosmopolitanism. Okakura had to view “the East” as one autonomous world. Furthermore, that world was possible only in art.

II

In 1903, stranded in India right before the Russo-Japanese war, Okakura Kakuzō wrote *The Ideals of the East* in English. He began the book with the following:

Asia is one. The Himalayas divide, only to accentuate, two mighty civilizations, the Chinese with its communism of Confucius, and the Indian with its individualism of the Veda's. But not even the snowy barriers can interrupt for one moment that broad expanse of love for the Ultimate and Universal, which is the common thought-inheritance of every Asiatic race, enabling them to produce all the great religions of the world, and distinguishing them from those maritime peoples of the Mediterranean and the Baltic, who love to dwell on the Particular, and to search out the means, not the end, of life.¹¹

The first line was later disseminated as a slogan for Pan-Asianism, even in the Arabic world, through the hand of Indian Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, resulting in part from Okakura's participation in the Bengali independence movement. The text is infused with political implications: Okakura was highly aware that art exists as a result of discourses, hence it is a fundamentally political practice.

Okakura perceived the oneness of the East through its art. To be more exact, Okakura invented the "East" through his discourse on art. Guided by the Hegelian philosophy he learned from Fenollosa, Okakura was able to apprehend world history in an aesthetic manner. The "ideal" contained in the title of his book pointed not toward some sort of yet-to-be fulfilled goal, but to the Hegelian "Idee," something already existing in a concrete manner. According to Hegel, history is a stage where the Idee realizes itself, and art is one form in which the Idee is sensually reified. While in Hegel art is placed under philosophical cognizance, in reality, his philosophy is aesthetic on the whole. In this sense Okakura was quite Hegelian in that he understood Asian history as a history of art, hence as the history of Idee's self-realization. However, although he did not announce his intent, Okakura not only inverted Hegel's Eurocentrism, but also took his dialectics as a target. In Hegel, contradiction plays an important role, as it is that which brings about struggles, which in turn produces history. Regarding that, Okakura brought in the Advaitism of Indian philosophy instead of contradiction, a oneness that consists of difference and the manifold.¹² It was thus in this manner that he proclaimed that "Asia is one."

In Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, India was placed on an earlier stage of history because its development had been blocked due to the spirit's obsession with the abstract identity. Development is born from contradiction, opposition, and struggle. In a certain sense we could say that Hegel was explaining the idea of "Asian stagnation" with his own language.¹³ In opposition to Hegelian dialectics, Okakura argued for the fundamental identity between things that seemed contradictory. This identity is not sheer sameness, but allows for any kind of multiplicity and difference; for Okakura, identity was encapsulated in the term "love." This is reminiscent of what the philosopher Nishida Kitarō later named the "self-identity of absolute contradiction."

Employing this concept in the 1930s, Nishida critiqued Hegel's dialectics and simultaneously formulated the basis of the "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere." Speaking of this juncture, Okakura's *The Ideals of the East* was translated into Japanese around the same period—Okakura himself only published it in English—and viewed and treated as a forerunner of the "Overcoming Modernity" intellectual debates in the 1930s. Subsequently, after the Second World War this position became associated with all the notoriety of the aforementioned ideas, even though they were unrelated to Okakura's own intentions. However, looking at it historically, such accusations were not carried out without rhyme or reason: what was represented by Okakura were the strong anti-industrial-capitalist, pro-agriculturalist sentiments also extant within Fascism, which at the same time metamorphosed into pan-Asianism. While Okakura's writings were certainly all concerned with problems of aesthetics, they could not be exempted from political connotations: precisely because aesthetics was Okakura's sole concern, his works were imbued with further political meaning.

For Okakura, the "oneness" of the East implied an identity of Asian countries colonized by the Western powers. But a passive identity was not what he searched for: Okakura was driven by a need to discover an active identity for the whole of Asia, and for him it could only be found in the perspective of the fine arts. There are two reasons for this: first, unlike Europe, the "oneness" of the East was not conceivable from religious and political viewpoints, and secondly, Okakura was confident that the arts were the only field in which Asia could contend with the West. In contrast to Fenollosa, the aestheticism of Okakura's *The Ideals of the East* thus proclaimed a clear political agenda. The fact is, therefore, that there is no such thing as "ideals of the East" for Okakura, but rather that the "East" as such is an ideal.

In the meantime, contrary to Okakura's beliefs, Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese war (1904) was made possible by the importation of Western civilization, a result that was completely unaesthetic and perhaps

even the antithesis of the “ideals of the East.” In *The Book of Tea* (1906), which Okakura wrote in Boston, he issued the following claims:

The beginning of the twentieth century would have been spared the sanguinary warfare if Russia had condescended to know Japan better. What dire consequences to humanity lie in the contemptuous ignoring of Eastern problems! European imperialism, which does not disdain to raise the absurd cry of the Yellow Peril, fails to realize that Asia may also awaken to the cruel sense of the White Disaster. You may laugh at us for “having too much tea,” but may we not suspect that you of the West have “no tea” in your constitution?

Let us stop the continents from hurling epigrams at each other, and be sadder if not wiser by the mutual gain of half a hemisphere. We have developed along different lines, but there is no reason why one should not supplement the other. You have gained expansion at the cost of recklessness; we have created a harmony weak against aggression. Will you believe it?—the East is better off in some respects than the West!¹⁴

Without Japan’s military victory, Okakura would not have spoken about *Eastern superiority* with such full confidence; without Japan’s triumph his words would have been ignored. Yet whatever Okakura had in mind, and however much Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese war encouraged the populations inhabiting Asia to the Middle East, the Japanese themselves could not have been less concerned by Japan’s role model as an example of Asian independence. The Japanese chose to “gain expansion at the cost of recklessness.” Needless to say, Okakura was deeply disappointed by the turn of events, and his disappointment contained the sense that the significance of art once attached to it had vanished. By that time, Japan’s industrial development gave it products to export other than art. Curiously, Okakura’s disillusionment with Japan led him to find work at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the direct inverse of Fenollosa, who had left Boston for Japan.

What was truly significant was never the specific thing called the art museum. I have previously elaborated the importance of seeing the museum as an organizing apparatus of “world history,” and Okakura possessed a keen awareness about this. He was not a nationalist in the narrow sense, because he consistently kept the “East” within his vision. Unlike other nationalists who stressed the uniqueness of Japan, Okakura readily admitted that all of Japan’s thought and religion were indebted to the Asian continent. *The Ideals of the East* was based on Indian Buddhist Philosophy, and *The Book of Tea* similarly applied Chinese Zen (Ch’an) Buddhism. Even so, however, Okakura persisted in searching for the “great privilege of Japan”: the idea that Japan preserved all that had historically risen and

fallen throughout India and China's existence. In India, Buddhism had all but disappeared; the Ch'an Buddhism that developed in China had also ceased to exist, only in Japan do they both remain. This applied similarly to art.

Okakura felt that the "insular isolation . . . made Japan the real repository of the trust of Asiatic thought and culture." He continues:

[T]he history of Japanese art becomes thus the history of the Asiatic ideals—the beach where each successive wave of Eastern thought has left its sand-ripple as it beat against the national consciousness.

Thus Japan is a museum of Asiatic civilization; and yet more than a museum, because the singular genius of the race leads it to dwell on all phases of the ideals of the past, in that spirit of living Advaitism which welcomes the new without losing the old. The Shinto still adheres to its pre-Buddhistic rites of ancestor-worship; and the Buddhists themselves cling to each various school of religious development which has come in its natural order to enrich the soil.¹⁵

A similar point has been made by the postwar political scientist, Maruyama Masao, in a critical context.¹⁶ He argues that since there is no principle that functions as a coordinate axis for individual bodies of thought in Japan, all foreign cultures are received and accepted. Due to lacking an axis, however, there is no conflict, which would lead to development: there is only constant importation of the new. As a result, all types of foreign thought messily cohabit the space of Japanese thought. This is not to say that such thoughts are abandoned or disregarded, but they are recalled into use whenever necessary.

This situation also pertains to that of the arts. Yet, it was in such a "Japan" that Okakura found its "great privilege." "Japan" in this regard is not a substantial thing but something similar to what Nishida Kitarō called a "place of nothingness" (*mu no basho*), an empty receptacle, the workings of transformation itself. The Advaitism Okakura identified as an Indian philosophy was, in fact, more suitable to the space of Japanese thought than that of India: as it were, it was within the space of Japan that he composed a "history of the East." It goes without saying that this is a Japan-centrism under a different form. Okakura's ideas of "Japan as museum" were subsequently freely applied in the ideology of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, where Japan would be the leader.

However, Okakura was quite correct when he viewed Japan itself as a museum. For example, Fenollosa was able to grasp an "Eastern art" in Japan only because artworks of the ancient East had been preserved in no other Asian locale, but only in Japan, the "museum." Japan not only holds a multitude of ancient Chinese art, but also the art of Sassanian Persia in their complete forms, objects not even Iran possesses. What Fenollosa

achieved was the classification and arrangement of such art, but it might not be a coincidence that it was an American from Boston who “invented” Japanese art history.

The encounter between Fenollosa and Okakura belies a deeper, more complex problematic that requires further prodding than a general account of “East meets West” for clarification. If the insular nation of Japan is a “museum” as Okakura described, then America is also an insular island—regardless of its enormity—and thus also a type of “museum.” It is a “beach” on which “waves of thought” from all over Europe continue to surge forward. Yet, if we were to stress that there is a strain of thought insisting on an unchanging principle underlying America despite all it receives, its representative would be Emerson’s transcendentalism. In his speech titled “American Scholar,” Emerson argued for an affirmation of the pragmatic over the theoretical, severance from the books and tradition of the European continent, and superiority of the self’s internal intuition. We could say that the affinity toward the East ranging from Thoreau and Whitman up to the Beat Generation is rooted in transcendentalism.

In other words, the cosmopolitanism of Fenollosa—who discovered Eastern arts—was deeply entangled with an Emersonian transcendentalism. Even though he identified himself as belonging to the “West,” Fenollosa was nonetheless not at all European. This is presented in the difference between Fenollosa and the European Impressionists, who were only interested in “Japan” as a fiction, as I have already stressed. Fenollosa conceptualized a “world arts history,” or a world history from an aesthetic perspective: it cannot be denied that a certain anti-European spirit is dwelling within this perspective itself.

After the First World War, the United States had replaced Great Britain and seized hegemony over economic and military fronts, but not quite yet hegemony in terms of culture. America deprived Europe of its cultural hegemony, in actuality, through the art museum. After the establishment of New York’s Museum of Modern Arts (MoMA) in 1929, the US architect Philip Johnson organized the pioneering show of the International Style, which brought about the advent of modern architecture. In 1936 Alfred H. Barr, the first director of the museum, curated two shows: “Cubism and Abstract Art” and “Fantastic Art—Dada and Surrealism,” through which he categorized and divided the various types of European modern art movements as either belonging to geometric abstractionism or Expressionism. Through these events Barr created a scenario which placed the incipient American Abstract Expressionism as a synthesis of both categories: the true frontier of modern art. Subsequently, a group of critics, including Clement Greenberg, created a logically explicit paradigm for modern art, and furthermore

constructed a process to use the paradigm in various ways which allowed competition and replacement between sub-paradigms. Soon the art market, not to mention the museum and criticism, became involved in the process. It would not be out of character to say that artworks of the world were being absorbed into the “museum” called America, though such a museum seems to be reaching a saturation point as of late. In other directions, however, the activities of multiculturalism in America are on the rise, which, on a certain level, is very close to what Fenollosa aimed for. Yet as if pointing toward Okakura’s prescience, it is impossible for such a multiculturalism to avoid the discursive struggle.

To conclude, in the years after Fenollosa and Okakura were banished from the realm of Japanese art, it never managed to return to the sparkling heights it once perched on. While it constantly aims toward the vanguard of European arts, a conflict of principle has yet to happen in Japan. Basically, it seems that as Japanese cultural space continues to ceaselessly import culture, it is tending toward what Maruyama Masao called the “messy space of cohabitation.” If Japanese artists began to advocate the *Japanese-like* once again (*Japonisme*), it would constitute a return to ideas Okakura had already proposed—Advaitism, or Nishida’s “place of nothingness”—and such work would be organized and placed in the “museum” called America. This was a trajectory predetermined nearly a century ago during the encounter between Fenollosa and Okakura.

4

THE UTILITY OF AESTHETICS

After Orientalism

I

I will begin with an argument between two Nobel Literature Prize laureates—one Japanese and one French. In 1995, as a protest against French nuclear testing, Kenzaburo Ōe refused to participate in a conference held in France. On September 21, 1995, in response, Claude Simon published an open letter rebutting Ōe in *Le Monde*.¹ There was nothing particularly new about either Ōe's opinion opposing nuclear testing or Simon's opinion refuting it. Simon spoke of his experience of the Nazi occupation in the Second World War, claiming nuclear weapons as necessary to protect against just such situations. However, what is worth noting here is that Simon brought up the history of Japanese aggression toward Asia as a counter to Ōe's protest. By doing so, Simon completely forgot France's history of colonizing several regions around the world and the real effects of nuclear testing on islands in the South Pacific. But what is even more worth noting is that he mentions being moved by Japanese calligraphy while at the same time blaming Japan for its history.

We can say Claude Simon represents one recent tendency among French intellectuals who return to the value of Western Europe as represented in France after all kinds of revolutionary gestures and ado. He cannot even think it is possible to take intellectual and moral criticism from the likes of a Japanese person. If a Japanese person brings something to a French person, it has to be an aesthetic object. Simon does not intend to look down on the Japanese at all. Rather, he speaks with pleasure about his respect and love for Japanese culture. However, in this regard, he brackets ordinary Japanese people who live with concerns about a number of moral and

intellectual problems and who actually exist in modern society, because they do not evoke a sense of “wonder” for him.

For Claude Simon and the French Japanophiles who praise and love Japan, it was the “Japanese culture” of Zen and *ukiyo-e* and such that inspired wonder, not the real Japan as an economically threatening other. That is to say, what he loved is a Japan as an aesthetic representation; and as much as possible he wants Japanese people to remain as such. He neither wants to see Westernized Japanese people nor hear them speak Western languages. However, this is not simply the attitude of Simon alone, but that of French intellectuals who are interested in Japan as well as that of other Westerners who declare a “praise of and love for Japan.” In a word, this is an aesthetic posture.

In contemporary North America, in general, the number of intellectuals who would take up this posture against the non-Western world would be less than nil. This sort of difference is clearly the result of Edward Said’s *Orientalism*. Of course, it is not only that. In spite of the book having been translated, it never became a major issue of concern in France or Germany; therefore it cannot be the case that this one book alone simply changed the situation. What helped this book gain wide acceptance was the experience of the Civil Rights and Anti-Vietnam War Movements of the 1960s. If we can divide North American intellectuals into pre- and post-Said temporal camps, European intellectuals would dwell solely in a pre-Said and pre-*Orientalism* temporality. But why is that the case?

One point emphasized by Said’s book is that orientalism ignores the moral and intellectual existence of people from non-Western societies by seeing them purely as objects of social science analysis. It takes non-Western people as truly inferior in terms of morals and intellect. But of equal importance is the way orientalism consists of a posture that glorifies those morally and intellectually inferior non-Westerners in terms of aesthetics. And this results in a self-deception from which it is difficult for the person who holds the posture of orientalism or the orientalist to extract themselves. They tend to think of themselves as better than other Westerners because, they believe, they are treating non-Western people as more than equal.

What I want to clarify here is first that this sort of posture is not traditional, but rather originates in modern science and aesthetics, which are linked to each other. Second, due to its scientific and aesthetic origin, this posture extends through the non-Western world. Rather than being a contradiction, it is mutually complementary both to look down on the other as simply a scientific object and to look up to it as an aesthetic object. The posture of social science that deals with the other simply as an object is fundamentally based on the posture of the modern natural sciences. The sciences see an object stripped of every religious or magical meaning that has been

attached to it. We can see the eighteenth century European Enlightenment as an embodiment of this posture. However, since then, which is to say in the romanticism after the second half of the eighteenth century, a different posture appeared. It is the aesthetic attitude toward others, who are aesthetically appreciated while looked upon as intellectually and morally inferior.² Others are categorized as either “noble savages” in the outside or sacred medievals inside. But the scientific attitude and the aesthetic one are absolutely not in opposition. The aesthetic attitude would have been impossible without being preceded by the scientific one, to begin with.

Here we need to theorize and clarify the aesthetic attitude. It was Kant who most clearly extended his inquiry into the aesthetic attitude which appeared in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Conforming to the traditional distinctions of the time, Kant divided our attitude toward objects into three—first, our epistemological concern for truth and falsehood; second, our moral concern for good and evil; and last, our judgment of taste concerning pleasure and displeasure. However, one way in which Kant’s distinctions differed from those that had preceded him was that he simply clarified the areas established by each without bestowing hierarchy of rank upon them. So what this means, for example, is that we respond to a given object in at least these three areas simultaneously. At the same time that we perceive a given thing, we morally discern whether the object is good or evil, while taking pleasure or displeasure in the object. Which is to say, the three areas are always mixed together, often appearing in self-contradictory ways. And so even if it is both untrue and bad, a thing can be pleasing; and the inverse may also occur.

What Kant saw as a condition for judging taste was viewing a given thing with “disinterestedness.” Disinterestedness is that which brackets temporarily epistemological and moral concerns. It is temporary because such concerns cannot be abolished. However, such bracketing is not limited to the judgment of taste alone. Even with scientific knowledge, other concerns must be bracketed in the same way. For example, during surgical diagnosis and operations, viewing the patient aesthetically and morally would be ill-advised. And in a moral (religious) perspective, interests in truth/fiction or pleasure/displeasure must be bracketed. The necessity of this bracketing is a modern phenomenon. That is because modern scientific knowledge established itself on the bracketing of religious understanding and magical motives. However, to bracket other factors is not to erase them.

If this is the case, then we can also say that this sort of conscious bracketing is also particular to aesthetics after Kant. In Kant’s thinking, beauty is not simply a sensible agreeableness. But, neither is it simply a posture of disinterestedness. Rather it is born from a positive action that abandons “interest.” The more difficult this bracketing of interest is, the more

pleasure the subject takes in its own positive action. This is precisely what makes Kant's aesthetics appear subjective. Kant lived in the transitional period between classicism (corresponding to the Enlightenment) and romanticism. Classical aesthetics established the convention that beauty lay in an object's form. Whether a thing was beautiful or not could be understood objectively according to its form. However, for Kant, beauty is born from subjective activity that imaginatively tries to recover symmetry or purposiveness—for instance, the symmetry subtly lacking in a structure. And in this case, to the extent that bracketing interest is difficult, pleasure grows through implementing this bracket.

What marks Kant's thinking more clearly is his idea of sublimity. The sublime is precisely the pleasure that comes from the subject's active effort to overcome the difficulty of objects which only bring displeasure at first glance. According to Kant the sublime is not in the object, but rather the infinitude of reason that transcends the finitude of sensibility. Or conversely, the sublime is the self-alienation (*Selbstentfremdung*) that discovers the infinitude of reason in the object which confronts the self.³ Of course, the sublime is essentially different from religious fear. For instance, an object that overwhelms human-beings—as in the case of lightning in the night sky—is sublime only insofar as its cause is scientifically understood and as it is observed from a safe place. Otherwise, it would become religious fear or “a sign.” In this way, the aesthetic judgment of the sublime is tacitly connected to the understanding of modern science.

However, here it is necessary to think about the realm which Kant did not investigate, a realm in which all kinds of differences between things are bracketed; it is necessary to think about the economics of money, in which a variety of use values and actual labor are resolved into exchange value or “social and abstract labor” to use Marx's words. At the beginning of *Capital*, Marx writes:

The commodity is, first of all, an external object, a thing which through its qualities satisfies human needs of whatever kind. The nature of these needs, whether they arise for example, from the stomach, or the imagination, makes no difference. Nor does it matter here how the thing satisfies man's need, whether directly as a means of subsistence, i.e. an object of consumption, or indirectly as a means of production.⁴

Which is to say that in the world of the commodity economy, total “disinterestedness” in the differences between objects (their use value) is produced. However, in this economy, to be disinterested is to be interested exclusively in *profit*.

Albert O. Hirschman notes that the idea of “interest” arose as a passion opposing passion in the eighteenth century. What controlled passion was not reason or inhibition, but passion which sought profit.⁵ Therefore, what Kant called “disinterestedness” meant bracketing the “interest” and thereby rediscovering difference in a variety of things. For the romantics, Kant’s disinterestedness became the bracketing of economic interest and this was formalized as “art for art’s sake.” However, what should be addressed is the fact that Kantian bracketing (the purification of all realms) is inseparable from the capitalist economy that nullifies difference between all realms. In reality, in order to purify the moral realm, Kant brackets interest, which is also utility or happiness. The reason he did not confer hierarchical ranks to the three realms was certainly because the commodity economy reduced everything in these realms to “interest” or profit. He tried to bracket interest in *Critique of Judgment*, but doing so itself was already implicitly a function of the commodity economy. Thus, from the moment art was conceived as art in the third *Critique*, it was bound intimately to commodification.⁶

In other words, what Kant clarified was the notion that the existence of art depends on the subjective activity of bracketing various other interests. However, this is neither particularly classicist nor romantic. Though he rejected classicism, he was not oriented toward romanticism. He saw the problems of modern art at the basis of these movements. And these are not old problems. Clement Greenberg found Kant to be the first modernist. Drawing on Kant, for instance, he found in “planarity (flatness)” that which makes paintings paintings and different from architecture and sculpture. However, the intention of “purification” in this sort of modernism must result in its own destruction. Greenberg found this in Mondrian’s attempts to make paintings into architecture. It is nothing more than a self-destruction of the pure realm that had been established through bracketing—and thereby unbracketing from within—a destruction that took place when the realm was regarded as if it had its own autonomous existence.

Accordingly, Kant’s deliberations can connote not simply modernism, but also an immanent critique of it. For instance, Duchamp’s urinal on display at an art exhibit demands a bracketing of everyday concern. In this case, the implicit message is “this is a creative work in an art exhibit” and, therefore, demands such bracketing. Things seen in this way are no longer mere things but become the formal material of artistic works. Duchamp has revealed that what makes art art is simply the claim, “this is art!” And that to my mind is the signal demanding, “start bracketing!” Rather than simply showing that art is what is found in a museum or an exhibit, Duchamp shows that any given thing can become art. However, this is possible only

insofar as it is generally believed that museums and exhibitions certify art as art.

From this example, we can reflect on a number of problems conceived within Kant's thought. First, what Duchamp points to is the fact that a urinal is generally associated with offensiveness. People are forced to bracket that sort of emotion. But, according to Kant's thought, activity that brackets displeasure allows for metaphysical pleasure. In romanticism, this bracketing gave life to a kind of perversion. For instance, evil which encounters moral opposition can bring pleasure through the subjective activity of bracketing it. Therefore, aestheticism paradoxically requires "evil" and abjection. Of course, Kant did not approve this sort of extremism. What he made clear was that the pure domains of truth, good, and beauty were established by an active bracketing, and also that this bracketing must be cancelled whenever and wherever it is necessary. Which is to say, that he did not prioritize either bracketing or unbracketing. Rather, he demanded this kind of freedom to bracket and unbracket—a freedom that is difficult to realize.

Aestheticism does not take pleasure simply from the given object as such but from the very act of bracketing a number of responses toward the object. When an aesthete glorifies something, it is because the object itself is not pleasurable but so displeasing that it is usually avoided. When an aesthete is set to bow before something, it is certainly not a truly servile submission. Rather it is actually a way of taking pleasure in bracketing the displeasure of being subservient to the object that is in fact controllable. We can see it can be likened to masochism. What is pleasing about subservience for the masochist is actually the confirmation of superiority over the partner from a position of safety. This runs parallel to what Kant found in the "sublime." This kind of masochism is clearly a modern phenomenon.

For example, regarded as a Japanese people's "art" of the seventeenth century, *ukiyo-e* definitely shook the nineteenth century French impressionists. And the Japanese arts and crafts were so popular that they had a broad influence on Art Nouveau. However, Japonisme alone was not a special case. After Japonisme, in the same way, the African arts had a broad influence. These appreciations were simply nothing more than aesthetic valuation and appropriation into the aesthetes' art. This attitude was possible precisely by the colonization of the people that had created the works or by the fact that its colonization was possible at any moment. However, aesthetes (continually forgetting about all of that) thought bowing before the beauty meant a respect and esteem for the other at an equal level.

This sort of phenomenon began with romanticism. This was evident in Germany after Kant, though it appeared even earlier in England and France. Romanticists started praising past arts and crafts only after they had

been destroyed by the emergence of mechanical reproduction. Benjamin wrote of the vanishing of the aura around artworks in the age of mechanical reproduction. In reality, however, it was just the opposite; it is in the age of mechanical reproduction that an aura was conferred onto artworks of the past. That is to say, they had been transformed into art (artworks). However, this transformation was not because it was work done by hand. Mechanically reproduced products still have the potential for aura. Aura does not exist within the object. As Kant pointed out, art does not reside in the form of the object, but rather in regarding the object as art or in seeing it with disinterestedness. For instance, what Andy Warhol did again and again was to modify (bracket) our attitude toward the object (of mechanical reproduction) which it is difficult for us to view with disinterest. And here we should recall that Duchamp had already accomplished this with his "Fountain," which was a reproduction.

This sort of aesthetic attitude appeared along with the Industrial Revolution. It was an appreciation of a mode of production which had become economically extinct (manual labor) and also of the lifestyle of those in manufacturing. In England, Ruskin is representative of this sort of phenomenon. At the same time, what we need to be careful about is the fact that this aestheticism in the industrialized countries which appreciates manual labor cannot be separated from the aesthetic attitude toward the cultures they rule and destroy by colonization, just as anthropologists examining "foreign" barbarians and unwesternized societies and, their seeming inverse, the folklorists that return to their own "native" premodernity are secretly linked. The aesthetic attitude is established by bracketing other elements than the beautiful. However, we always need to be able to remove those brackets. This is just like seeing a gang as heroes in a movie theater, but as soon as we go out having to be wary of them. Nevertheless, the characteristic trait of aesthetes is their forgetting to remove these brackets. Because of the brackets they always mistake the other constructed through bracketing for the actual other, or respect of that kind of beauty for a respect for the other. Thus, oddly, to the aesthetes, colonialism is something to be ignored.

Colonialism and imperialism are always charged as being sadistic forms of rule. However, the most colonialistic attitude is to appreciate and respect the other aesthetically and to bracket all the elements other than aesthetics. What Edward Said called "Orientalism" is nothing more than this sort of attitude. Without this attitude, it would have been impossible for the simple will to knowledge and rule to form the vast storehouse of Oriental Studies. However, this aesthetic interest is the disavowal of the fact that this "other" lives an ordinary life, which is not at all surprising or "exotic". As always opposing colonization, aesthetes are always against industrial capitalism.

Ironically, however, this anti-capitalist posture is possible only after the appearance of industrial-capitalism. We can see that fascism has its true seeds in this aestheticism. That is to say, fascism aesthetically sublimates the contradictions of capitalist economies by appearing anti-capitalist.

The example of Duchamp implies one more aspect about the process of bracketing and un-bracketing. The African-American writer James Baldwin talks about this process. He had not been interested in reading Shakespeare because he saw racial discrimination against blacks in *Othello*. However, while he was living in non-English-speaking Paris, he for the first time began to feel he could accept Shakespeare because he became self-conscious of being both a writer who was black and at the same time a writer who wrote in English.⁷ In this case, it is safe to say that Baldwin was able to see *Othello* as art by bracketing its discrimination toward blacks. However, the problem was not with Baldwin, but the white, English-speaking observers who saw *Othello* simply as art. They do not intentionally bracket what exasperated Baldwin but forget the very fact of bracketing of racism from the start. They believe that such imbeciles who cavil at the great bard fail to understand art. This is the same attitude that considers all those things to be art if they are placed in a museum. They need to stop bracketing race issues at least one time.

We can see the same movement of bracketing/unbracketing regarding the viewpoints enabled by the emergence of feminist critique and queer theory. It points to the typical way heterosexual male readers ignore their process of bracketing. In other words, such approaches remove brackets, but they do not deny the artistry of the art. For example, in the case when given work portrays women as simply an aesthetic emblem of [heterosexual] male desire, unbracketing of sexism does not simply deny the artistry of the work. If it is a great work, the text will permit many alternative interpretations. And when we reread the text as such, we will bracket the earlier criticism, but it goes without saying that this does not erase such criticism.

II

What I have thus far argued might seem like simply an attack on France and the Western Great Powers. But what I want to say is that the same was true for Japan. Politically, Japan escaped from becoming a colony, but in other domains it received without resistance European civilization (culture) and from the beginning of the twentieth century manifested itself as an imperial nation-state. However, this was not a unique case. The same can be said of the United States, Israel, China, and India and even Vietnam

after its independence. Nationalism, which assumes the positive meaning under colonization or the threat of colonization, transforms into imperialism, but this transformation is not an inherent problem of a particular nation-state but structurally caused by nationalism's own latent properties. For instance, as Fichte writing under Napoleon's occupation wrote: "But, in regard to space, we believe that it is first of all the Germans who are called upon to begin the new era as pioneers and models for the rest of mankind."⁸ However, every nation-state has right to say this, and in fact has been saying it.

Japan crossed the line from nationalism to imperialism with the Sino-Japanese War of 1894. Historians have examined the political discourse relating to this period, but largely ignored the importance of the aesthetic discourse. But since, rooted in the domain of Kantian "sensibility," nationalism is concerned with the aesthetic, we must consider its aesthetic dimension. Here I want to bring up Okakura Kakuzō (also known as Okakura Tenshin) and Yanagi Sōetsu (also known as Yanagi Muneyoshi). It is Okakura who first appreciated Japanese handicrafts as art and, extending that appreciation to all Asian crafts, affirmed an idea of Asian unity and oneness in terms of art history. Furthermore, in his *Ideals of the East*, which was published in English in India, he insisted on the superiority of the East from this aesthetic position and on liberation from the industrial capitalism that supported Western colonialism.

However, regarding Okakura's ideas, we have to point out the following. First, Okakura was taught by an American—Ernest Fenellosa—although Okakura would later reject him. Second, Okakura insisted on the aesthetic superiority of Japanese handicrafts and made fine arts representative of Japan precisely because, as shown by French Japonisme, Japanese handicrafts were the only exportable products except for silk. Which is to say, this was a problem of commodity production; Okakura's argument is impossible without presupposing a taste and demand for handicraft in the West. Furthermore, Okakura tried to resist Western industrial capitalism through Eastern handicraft, but most of his ideas had already been anticipated by Ruskin. And the English woman with the Indian name who published Okakura's book called him the "Morris of the East" in the preface to *Ideals of the East*, and, of course, Okakura was well aware of this discourse without even referring to these names.

The universal principle that he claimed to discover in Buddhist philosophy was simply constructed retroactively after the historical penetration of industrial capitalism. This desire to protect and appreciate preindustrial capitalist products became possible only after the establishment of industrial capitalism. Whether this appreciation of the preindustrial was an elegy for something which had passed, psychological compensation for

something passing, or an implicit parade of superiority over the other, it is difficult to say. For example, take the following from Okakura's *Book of Tea* written while he was in Boston.

He [the average Westerner] was wont to regard Japan as barbarous while she indulged in the gentle arts of peace: he calls her civilised since she began to commit wholesale slaughter on Manchurian battlefields. Much comment has been given lately to the Code of Samurai—the Art of Death which makes our soldiers exult in self-sacrifice; but scarcely any attention has been drawn to Taoism, which represents so much of our Art of Life. Fain would we remain barbarians, if our claim to civilisation were to be based on the gruesome glory of war. Fain would we await the time when due respect shall be paid to our art and ideals.⁹

However, what enabled him to write in this way was the fact that Japan had already defeated Russia militarily. And after the Russo-Japanese War he could separate himself from the Asian colonial liberation movements, shutting out all but purely aesthetic concerns at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. His book was read in Japan during the 1930s at the time when Japan aspired for an “Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.” At that time, the “Asian oneness” discovered in his aesthetics functioned as an ideology which aesthetized the Japanese rule of Asia.

However, I want to pay careful attention to two points. Okakura along with Fenellosa discovered as art the “Kannon in the Dream Hall” hidden at Hōryūji Temple in Nara. That work condensed the entire history of fine art from Greek through all of Asia. After this discovery, Okakura could call Japan the “museum of Asia.” However, by looking to a passage from Okakura himself, we can understand just how this sort of “discovery” was made.

Around the seventeenth year of Meiji [1885], Fenellosa, Kanō Tessai, and I requested the monks to open the gate. But the monks stated that, when opened, there would definitely be thunder and lightning. The monks said that during the first year of Meiji, when the doctrine of mixing Shintō and Buddhism was being advocated boisterously, people tried to open the gates, but gave up because they became frightened when the dark clouds rolled in and it began to thunder. Without heeding well the conspicuous signs that they had pointed out; we opened the gate, claiming that we would take responsibility for the thunder. In fear, the monks all ran away.¹⁰

It was not only the Buddhist monks who feared sinning against the Buddhist icon, but the people as well felt this way. For them, the Kannon

was not a work of fine art, but rather an object of religious fear. Okakura's behavior shows that the "disinterestedness" which enabled the appreciation of artistic beauty would not have been possible without modifying the attitude toward the object (bracketing) that was necessary for the natural sciences. Since the advent of romanticism in the West, church ornaments have been considered as art, and paradoxically, religion has been grasped as aesthetic.¹¹ Similarly, Okakura always referred to a religion (Buddhism), which was already interpreted from a modern or aesthetic vantage.

Okakura's use of Buddhism, which he himself believed to be religious concern, was something that destroyed the religious thought and customs of the people in cold blood. Domestically it is called modernization, beyond Japan it is called colonization. What Okakura had done in Hōryūji was done with precisely the same attitude as when he had gone around collecting Asian art. Singing the praises of anti-modernism, and anti-industrial capitalism, when he appreciated native cultural products, his attitude was surely modern and colonial.

When Okakura appreciated the people's art, we cannot blame his bracketing of the people that lived there. The problem is that in the end he never removed the brackets. Moreover, while advocating the independence of the Asian races, he showed indifference to the nearby Korean people. He said nothing regarding the facts that Korea was the staging ground for the Sino-Japanese War and that it was annexed to Japan in the post Russo-Japanese War era; and he spoke as though it were completely natural that Korea be ruled by Japan.¹²

On the other hand, the work of Yanagi Sōsetsu, who began his activities after the death of Okakura, becomes far more clear when it is compared to that of Okakura. Yanagi first became known through his "Folk-Craft Movement." It goes without saying that, in the same way as Okakura, there was an anti-modernist and anti-industrial capitalist posture. However, more than Okakura who was called "the Morris of the East" by the British (English), he was by far more like Morris. The truth that most obviously signifies the difference between Yanagi and Okakura is the fact that Yanagi saw the "beautiful" in Korea while Okakura ignored it. Moreover, Yanagi supported Korean people's independence. This is what he declared at a lecture in Seoul in May of 1920.

In sum, one major question for life in the twentieth century is whether or not it is possible for one nation to assimilate another. No one living today, not even people who understand world history, can answer the question affirmatively, not to mention coercion such as annexation, but even in the case of assimilation according to peaceful policies. Who really believes that others can be enlightened by Japan with its internal contradictions and extreme

imperfection? What we always need to keep in mind is that Korea has produced great beauty and the people who live there possess this great beauty.¹³

Later in the 1930s, as he opposed the coercive policies of linguistic and cultural assimilation in Okinawa, Yanagi extolled the Okinawans as a “people with a great art.” But, could this have meant that without the “great art,” their demand for independence would have been baseless? Okakura might have answered this question affirmatively. He praised India and China, but that was because they were “nations that gave birth to a great art.” On the other hand, according to Okakura, Korea possessed no “great art.” For Yanagi, however, it does.

The most important aspect about the “great art” Yanagi saw in Korea is that it is not the fine arts which remained under the aristocratic Chinese tradition, but rather the handiwork that was despised by the ideology of the Confucian status system. When he said that the Korean people comprised one of the “nations that gave birth to a great art,” Yanagi criticized not only Japan which colonized it but also the Korean social status system which had rejected that kind of handicraft and invited Japanese colonial rule. In order to see handicraft as art, the ancient social status system and morality had to be abolished. And from that, Yanagi thought, Korean independence would first begin. The Korean independence movement was a folk art movement and the folk art movement was an independence movement. Moreover, Yanagi repudiated the notion of Koreans acquiring independence through violence as mere mimicry of the way of the Japanese, a way doomed to its own destruction.¹⁴ What Yanagi was calling for was certainly not the abandonment of resistance. He implicitly hinted at the cooperative movement and non-violent resistance that had been realized by Gandhi around that time in India. Of course, Yanagi was not the only one who supported Korean independence. Other humanists and Marxists as well supported it. However, theirs was only lip service; Japanese intelligentsia who mobilized and stood on the side of the Korean people to the extent that Yanagi Sōetsu did were rare indeed.

This sort of ethics of Yanagi’s cannot be severed from his aesthetic attitude. He did not demand the liberation of the Korean people for the sake of “beauty.” But had there not been “beauty,” he probably would not have maintained such a deep commitment to the cause. Behind artworks, Yanagi discovered the existence of individual producers who had been ignored. Yanagi’s attitude is in a way the removal of the brackets that accompany the aesthetic attitude. That is to say, Yanagi rejected the aesthetic posture, such as Okakura’s, which comes from admiring people’s art while ignoring the existence of each individual.

Said meticulously argued that the representation of the Orient was formed by Europeans. In Said's argument, it might appear as if the Orient was a kind of "thing in itself" (*Ding an sich*), and that therefore saying anything about it was nothing more than a phenomenon (representation). However, it does not generally prohibit the objectification of societies of the Orient. And it does not mean that only the Orient has the right for speaking about the Orient, or that it must not be seen as an aesthetic object. Rather what Said wanted to say is the opposite. He fought against the rule of the West and at the same time against the rule of Arabic tradition. What he wanted to say was that because of the fact of the existence of others who could never be epistemologically or aesthetically objectified, we must continue to fight against the oppression of individual human beings whether by the West or by the Orient.

5

NATION-STATE AND LINGUISTICS

I. SAUSSURE

In the first chapter I dwell upon the relationship between the empire, the nation-state, and imperialism. To sum up, first, the nation-state did not emerge *ex nihilo* but was formed within the empire through its dissolution and division. The empire includes various peoples but its principle of rule is different from that of the nation-state; unlike the empire's rule by laws, the nation-state demands homogeneity and consensus of the people. Second, when it is expanded, the nation-state calls itself an empire, but it is different from what was previously called by that name. Rather, it should be called *imperialism*. Imperialism is an expansion of the nation-state, and forces homogeneity on the other peoples. Eventually it provokes nationalism among the other peoples and results in the generation of other nation-states.

This chapter explores this process from the viewpoint of language and linguistics. From the viewpoint of linguistics, one of the characteristics of the empire is the fact that it had a *lingua franca* or a *world language*. For example, there are various forms of written languages such as Latin, Chinese characters, the Arabic alphabet, and the Cyrillic alphabet that are used by multiple tribes and states. Although there were innumerable spoken languages—vernaculars—under empires, they were not considered *languages*. These vernaculars were given the same status as dialects are today. For example, unintelligible words are called *Chinpun kanpun* (*Kanbun*)—or “Chinese”—in Japanese, and “Greek” in English; the philosophical concepts in these languages of empires were regarded as abstract and highbrow. On the contrary, spoken languages were slighted as vernaculars; putting this in terms of philosophy, sensibility was slighted because it was considered prone to deception. Conversely, the increasing importance

of sensibility and feeling in modern ages corresponds to that of the vernacular, or spoken language, over written language. By privileging spoken language, each people's language, which had been considered a vernacular, was promoted to the same status as that of the written language of the world empire or world religion, such as Hebrew, Greek, or Latin. The Romantic philosophers and linguists viewed language as an externalization of the people's spirit; and this view yielded the equation of the history of spoken language with that of the people.

It is, however, Indo-European comparative linguistics in the nineteenth century that established modern linguistics as a science in Europe. This linguistics severed language completely from the traditional empire, that is, from writing and cultures. For example, Germanic languages were considered to be within a family of Indian languages and to share a common origin, even though India had a different religion and culture from Europe and its language was written in Sanskrit. Such a community could not have been found if the object of linguistics had been written language. Indo-European comparative linguistics introduced an understanding of language in terms of the phoneme—namely, in an unconscious dimension. Since this linguistics formulated laws in the way of natural science, it was considered decisively different from traditional, humanistic philology.

Yet, while Romantic linguistics aimed to dissolve and divide the empire, Indo-European linguistics, or historical linguistics, aimed to unite languages historically into a family, which was different from the language of the empire or the world religion. Even though the family had nothing to do with the history of the people and civilization, it was considered an objective reality. As a result, the historical facts of Europe's indebtedness to Arabic civilization, such as Arabia's initial succession and development of Greek philosophy and its subsequent transmission to Europe, were thoroughly discarded; for, from the viewpoint of this linguistics, European civilization was assumed to be linked directly to Greece. The classification according to this linguistic genealogy erases the complex history that involves culture, politics, and religion. Instead, a teleological history could be discovered, a history that rationalizes the world hegemony of nineteenth century Europe. The linguists themselves acted without political intentions, but their presentation of linguistic cognition as science performed a supremely political function. For example, the idea of an Indo-European family provided an objective ground for anti-Semitism.

In this sense, historical linguistics of the nineteenth century became an ideology that upheld imperialism as an expansion of the nation-state. In my view, it is precisely Saussure who criticized this historical linguistics for the first time. At the age of twenty-one he wrote *Memoir on the Primitive System of Vowels in Indo-European Languages*, which was acknowledged

as an epochal work and won academic fame in France. Even today, the book is credited with anticipating the later ideas of Saussure as the father of structuralism. However, I would like to focus on the fact that Saussure never published a book after his return to Switzerland in 1891 at the age of thirty-four until his death in 1913. *Course in General Linguistics*, which is known as Saussure's writing, was edited posthumously by his students—Bally and Sechehaye—from lecture notes: the publication of the lectures was not intended by Saussure himself. Moreover, Saussure did not intend the lectures to be on “general linguistics.” His lectures turned out to be greatly influential not only in modern linguistics but also in contemporary thought, but it does not seem that he had any such ambition whatsoever. Considering the eminence of his activity as a linguist and promise of success, his silence is nothing but strange. Saussure seems to, and indeed he does, refuse to be a linguist.

In this respect, the situation in which Saussure abandoned his post in France and became a professor at the University of Geneva should be noted. At that time, French citizenship was required to come to a full professorship at Collège de France, but Saussure refused to obtain the citizenship. It is not certain whether the refusal was due to his nationalism as a Swiss citizen or not, but it is clear that Saussure was critically conscious that linguists were performing political roles. In his first lecture at the University of Geneva, he states the following:

Next, I would want to highlight the very specific contribution that linguistics has made to ethnography, to the point where linguistic data remain the primary proof for the ethnologist, at least until a richer source of information is uncovered. How, without such data, could the ethnologist ever have asserted (to take one example among thousands) that among Hungarians the Gypsies represent a totally distinct race from the Magyar, that within the Austrian Empire the Magyar in turn represent a race totally distinct from the Czech or the Germans; that on the other hand the Czech and the Germans who so detest each other are very close relatives; that in turn the Magyar is a close relative of the Finnish populations of the Russian Empire, on the Baltic Sea, about whom they know nothing; that in turn the Gypsies are a people who originate in India?¹

As stated above, the linguistic family discovered by historical linguistics has nothing to do with the histories of actual peoples; nevertheless, in reality it can affect history and create political situations. This problem existed not only in the Austrian Empire but also in Switzerland, in which this lecture was delivered. For instance, Switzerland has four official languages. In this case, are these French and German languages identical with those spoken in

France and Germany respectively? Or, are the French Swiss or the German Swiss identical with the French in France or the Germans in Germany? Thus, if national language and ethnicity are problematic, Switzerland as a nation-state cannot maintain itself. Delivered in Switzerland, Saussure's lecture is also addressed to the ideological situation of Europe.

Especially in France after its defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, nationalism was evident. In this respect, Renan's "What is a Nation," a lecture in 1882, is informative. Renan insisted that the nation has no substantial basis, whether as "race, language, material interests, religious affinities, geography, or military necessity," but is determined by the will of its inhabitants: the nation is "a daily plebiscite."² In this insistence, his warning was directed at the contemporary situation in which the scientific disciplines, such as linguistics, ethnography, genetics, were functioning as substantial bases for the nation. However, when Renan disputed the view that language was the basis for the nation, he did so indeed in order to maintain that the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine (occupied by Germany after the war) were part of the *French nation* despite the fact that they spoke German: Renan's lecture was rooted in a nationalistic motive. Nevertheless, his warning itself should be justified.³

Saussure returned to Switzerland in 1891, and three years later the Dreyfus affair took place, symbolizing anti-Semitism in France. Saussure was keenly conscious of linguistics' relationship to the affair; he felt nothing but disgust at his success as a linguist. When he left France, he also left comparative linguistics, as it were. What Saussure attempted back in Geneva is not an introduction of a new viewpoint to linguistics. If linguistics could exclusively mean comparative linguistics, it can be said that he dismissed linguistics in its entirety. It is this dismissal that brought about new linguistics, or rather new thought.

Today, Saussure is appreciated as the father of structuralism, but also criticized for it. Some of his critics claim that Saussure explored language by excluding writing, emphasized a synchronic system without taking speech and the subject into account, and insisted on internal linguistics while neglecting historical or political elements. No understanding of Saussure can be as unjust as this kind of criticism. It is true that Saussure conceived of internal linguistics, which would investigate language in its own system and consider the other elements external to language, but it never denies the political or historical elements in language. Rather, this externalization of the political and historical signifies that language is overwhelmingly external. For example, Saussure regarded writing as external to language, but he did so not because writing is secondary to speech.⁴ It is Romantic linguists who had seen spoken language as primary. On the other hand, Saussure emphasized not that spoken language was primary

over written language, but simply that spoken and written languages were different from each other.

Language and writing. It seems they were united, and yet we have to radically distinguish between them. The spoken word alone is the object of linguistics. Classifying the language in time is only possible because the language is written. We therefore cannot deprive writing of all its importance. In effect, as well as marking the stage of civilization and of perfection in the use of language, the written language and writing do not remain without having an effect on the spoken language. But the confusion between the written language and the spoken language was the cause of innumerable and infantile errors in the beginning.⁵

These two faculties [the written and spoken languages] occupy thus in any case two neighboring areas in the brain. Therefore we must not neglect the connections between writing and the language. Nonetheless, we must not forget that the spoken language alone is the object of linguistics. We remark nothing in the history of unwritten languages which is abnormal; on the contrary a language which has never been written constitutes the norm. But the influences of the written language on the spoken language are complex (we are led to certain choices, we only keep the words which are written often, we vitiate pronunciation . . .).⁶

Phonocentrism can be found universally in each modern nation. In reality, however, this mode of thinking is a deception. The spoken language, with which the Romantics began their language theory, was indeed formed in the process of translating the language of the empire, such as Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. That is, even though writing actually preceded speech, the Romantics believed that the spoken language was a direct expression of feelings or interiority. Moreover, historical linguistics also begins with spoken language, but it is based on the language that was recorded in writing; and it is never certain that the written record is identical with the actual speech. Nevertheless, writing is assumed to represent speech as such. Survival of a language in a written form witnesses the fact that a given language once possessed a certain level of civilization and state, but historical linguistics, by beginning with spoken language, disregards the civilization and state that existed in history. It is in this disregard that historical linguistics creates a history of a people.

Saussure does not deny the importance of writing when he states that "spoken language alone is the object of linguistics." The opposite is true: without writing, historical linguistics is impossible. Nevertheless, historical linguistics sees writing merely as a record of speech. Saussure's internal linguistics suggests that language is overwhelmingly exposed to

the “external.” While comparative linguistics assumes that, as if it were an organism, language matures, declines, and perishes, Saussure argues as follows:

A language cannot die naturally, or die peacefully. It can only die violently. The only way in which it can cease to exist is to be annihilated by force, by a cause wholly external to language itself. This may, for instance, be the total extermination of the people that speaks it, as will soon happen to the idioms of the Red Indians of North America. Otherwise the conditions that are generally needed are that a new language is imposed that belongs to a stronger race; there may be political domination, but also a superior civilization, and often the presence of a *written* language imposed through education, the Church, administration and all other aspects of public and private life. This situation has occurred hundreds of times in history: Gaulish in Gaul replaced by Latin, the black population of Haiti that speaks French, the Egyptian Fellah who speaks Arabic; the inhabitant of Geneva who speaks the dialect of Île-de-France and not the indigenous language that his forbears spoke a few centuries before. But these are not *linguistic* outcomes. A language never dies of inner exhaustion, after having completed its given career. In itself it is imperishable, there being no reason to do with the organization of the language itself that causes its transmission to cease. Near the beginning of his work on linguistics, M. Hovelacque says: “A language is born, grows, weakens and dies like any organic being.” This sentence is absolutely typical of the conception, so widespread even among linguists that one wearies of fighting it, which leads directly to a definition of linguistics as a natural science. No, a language is not an organism, it is not a plant with an existence independent of humankind, it does not have a life of its own which leads to birth and death. Everything in the sentence that I quoted is wrong: a language is not an organic being, it does not of itself die, weaken, or grow, since it has no more a childhood than middle or old age, and is not even born⁷

Language dies, but it is not a death from a “linguistic cause” or internal source. Language is a system, and never grows or dies of itself. Yet, it is exposed to overwhelmingly “external” elements. Written language, or the civilization it supports, is at work everywhere, and always affects spoken language. Focusing exclusively on these external outcomes, historical linguistics concludes that, being organic, language develops and declines. This is nothing but a projection of a civilization’s or a state’s development and decline on language. For example, the idea of French’s succession to Latin is a projection on language of the historical fact that Rome’s politico-cultural system was succeeded by France. Saussure harshly criticizes the notions of French as “daughter of Latin” and Latin as the “mother of the

Romance languages”: “Languages have neither daughters nor mothers; and they never have had.”⁸

Historical linguistics confuses language and culture, or language and the “external”; it assumes the accidental outcome of the *external* to be the *internal* continuity of language. It is this linkage that Saussure severed. Historical linguistics has regarded the results of that which is external to language as the law of language. That is to say, based on the objectivity of the law, it has judged the consequences of politics to be necessary. It is in order to dismantle the teleological theory of evolution in historical linguistics that Saussure conceived of the “synchronic system.”

Saussure emphasized the following: that the system of language does not change from the inside, that the system changes through the change of each term, that the change of each term is accidental, and that the change of system is discontinuous. These ideas, however, are not entirely new; for instance, they are shared with Darwin’s theory of evolution, as Jonathan Culler has pointed out.⁹ If historical linguistics’ theory of evolution is Lamarckian, Saussure’s would be Darwinian: in a similar manner to Darwin, he has deprived language’s change of teleology. Thus it is not in order to ignore the “external,” as structuralists do, that Saussure persists in the “internal linguistics.” On the contrary, he criticizes linguistics for its internalization of the outcome of the “external.” By insisting on the “internal linguistics,” he exposes the externality of the “external.”

In *Of Grammatology*, Derrida points out the West’s tradition of phonocentrism and logocentrism tracing back to Plato; and he considers that this kind of thought was produced by the phonogram—that is, the alphabet—because, in the case of the phonogram, writing appears to be secondary to speech. Yet, the phonogram does not necessarily cause phonocentrism. Under empire, the phonogram has a similar function to the ideogram, such as hieroglyphs or Chinese characters. In medieval Europe, for example, Latin was written in the phonogram, but it had nothing to do with phonocentrism. It is the anti-Latin sentiment, that is, the sentiment for vernacular spoken language, that caused phonocentrism. Since phonocentrism is a phenomenon specific to the modern nation, it cannot be grasped by a return to the all too distant past.¹⁰

Saussure emphasized that *langue* consists of differences that have no positive terms, but it should not be understood in terms of system theory or structuralism. Such an idea can be found abundantly in mathematics, and is not specific to Saussure. Although what was later called “structuralism” has been pinned to Saussure’s name, it is actually derived from the structuralism that was proposed by a group of mathematicians around André Weil—Bourbaki. However, what Saussure calls *langue* is different from the closed structures, such as the binary opposition of the phoneme

(Jakobson) or kinship of primitive society (Levi-Strauss). When Saussure argues that nothing is positive in language, he rejects the idea that language has “strictly delimited frontiers.”

Because writing positively delimits the frontier of *langue*, Saussure excludes it from his linguistics in which *langue* has no distinct frontiers in either spatial or temporal terms. The act of recording a certain dialect, for instance, delimits its frontier and even normalizes it.

Dialect fragmentation is everywhere in evidence. It is often disguised by a circumstance which has made one of the various dialects the literary language, or the official administrative language, or the language of exchange and *intercourse* between the different parts of the country, a situation of pre-eminence which has led this dialect alone to reach to us in written records, or which has led the other dialects to be stigmatized as awful, unstructured jargons, which are held to be the corruption of official language. Secondly the language adopted as the literary language often ends up killing . . .¹¹

The consequence of this observation, is that there is no regular border between what we call two language in contrast to two dialects, when these languages are of the same origin and spoken by adjoining settled populations. For instance, there is no frontier between Italian and French, between the dialects that we would like to call French and those . . . Dialects have no strictly delimited frontiers, and the same is true for languages under normal circumstances. So language, which we saw was not a notion defined in time, is not a notion defined in space either. There is no other way to define what we mean when we refer to a given language than to say *the language of Rome in the year x; the language of Annecy in the year of y*. In other words, to take a single restricted locality and a single point in time.¹²

The spoken language Saussure seeks out is a plural language, as an idiom in which even the borders between languages are unclear. Yet, it is not the sort of thing that can be ascertained through a so-called survey of dialects. This idiom exists only in theory. *Langue* is not writing, but neither is it spoken language. Much less is it national language. When Saussure himself explains *langue*, he uses the examples of French and English, which then laid the foundation for misinterpretation. *Langue* is not national language, but rather should refer to the kind of language which is extinguished by national language and which, furthermore, cannot clearly manifest the borders between them either spatially or temporally. For Saussure, *langue* is possible between at least two people. What Saussure’s internal linguistics seeks out is precisely the condition of the human being that exists through language, and Saussure shows that everything else is completely “external”—or political or economical.

II. TOKIEDA MOTOKI

Investigating Europe, I have argued that the nation-state emerges as a result of the empire's dissolution and division. The same can be said of non-Western empire. Indeed, these are not unrelated matters; for the world economy, or what Wallerstein calls the "modern world-system," which caused the rise of the nation-states in the West, is global. Under the development of world capitalism, peoples of the world were forced to organize themselves as nation-states. The direct cause of the rise of the nation-states outside the West was the pressure from the Western powers' colonialism or imperialism. Yet, in order that the peoples within the non-Western Empire may establish their nations, they must not only confront Western imperialism or promote westernization but also go through a stage of independence from the written language or the world religion of their former empire. If they fail in this stage of independence, they are unable to form nation-states with sovereignty and are subsequently colonized, while belonging to the empire, in other words, remaining as pre-capitalist states. (Needless to say, nation-states were formed eventually by national liberation movements in the colonies.)

I think we can explore this problem through the example of Japan, which dwelled on the periphery of Empires in East Asia. Japan escaped colonization by the West in the mid-nineteenth century, but it is impossible to understand Japan's case only in terms of the international situations of the time. It is not in the nineteenth century that Japanese encountered the modern West for the first time; in the "world market," which had been opened in the sixteenth century, they had not only dealt with the West but also gone by themselves as far as Southeast Asia for trade. In other words, Japanese had already experienced the "modern world-system." After the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa shogunate employed the policy of seclusion. That is to say, it is from the "world economy" that the shogunate isolated Japan on purpose: it was evident to the shogunate that international trade would facilitate the commodity economy and dissolve the feudal system. In spite of the seclusion, however, the Tokugawa shogunate could not restrain the rise of the commodity economy and the merchant class; and moreover, even after the seclusion, there was trade with China and Netherlands—or with the West through Netherlands—so that arts and sciences, medicine in particular, were introduced and widespread by the mid-eighteenth century.

The modernization after the Meiji period is clearly westernization. For example, it is obvious that the movement for the unification of spoken and written language that produced the *national language* of the modern state was fully conscious of the West. The same can be said

about the linguistics of Meiji Japan, which was a mechanical application of European comparative linguistics. Yet it should be noted that prior to the Meiji period, phonocentric thought and linguistics based on it had already emerged: this is evident in *kokugaku*—the study of national classics—led by Motoori Norinaga. In Japan, written expression of the vernacular by Chinese characters had begun in the seventh or eighth century; the phonetic signs, to which the Chinese characters were simplified, spontaneously developed from the phonetic usage of the characters. In the twelfth century, works such as *The Tale of Genji* were written in these phonetic signs. Generally speaking, however, writing in the mixture of Chinese characters and *kana* phonetic signs was more commonly used, and Chinese words and writing were considered superior: the language of the empire was superior, as the Japanese phonetic signs were called *ka-na*—literally “provisional letters”—in opposition to *ma-na*—“true letters”—which were Chinese characters. It is this superiority of Chinese that Motoori, a *kokugaku* scholar of the latter eighteenth century, attempted to subvert. He gave more prominence to *Record of Ancient Matters* [Kojiki] and *The Tale of Genji*—classical works that were written in Japanese words and therefore had been neglected—than those written in Chinese. This judgment corresponds to Motoori’s prioritization of feelings—*mono no aware*—over the understanding and morals of Confucianism or Buddhism, which had been dominant theretofore.

Motoori distinguishes between *shi* (words), which are written in Chinese characters, and *ji* (linking elements), which can be written only in the *kana* syllabary. Motoori uses a metaphor of a string (*ji*) that links beads (*shi*). Needless to say, however, Motoori’s distinction depends on the fact that Japanese writing, which mixes Chinese characters and the *kana* syllabary, reads Chinese with *kun*—the meaning of the character pronounced in Japanese. For example, the idea of the distinction between *shi* and *ji* has not occurred in Korean, which belongs to the same Altaic—agglutinative languages—as Japan does and also used Chinese characters. Motoori’s theory of syntax itself upholds the notion that prefers feelings or sentiments beyond conceptualization—*mono no aware*—to the culture derived from the empire, that is, the concepts or contents of Buddhism, Confucianism, or Taoism. That is to say, his theory of Japanese language is directly linked to nationalism.

Motoori’s nationalism has nothing to do with contemporary China in reality; rather it is a matter of the politico-economical system of Japan. Confucianism, Neo-Confucianism in particular, was the ideology that supported the Tokugawa shogunate’s feudal system, which was collapsing due

to the infiltration of the monetary economy. Motoori himself did not reject the actual feudalism; he simply sought to explore the “ancient path” prior to contamination by the character/civilization/state. Yet, scholars of national classics after Motoori advocated the restoration of imperial rule and sought to subvert the samurai government’s feudalism. Their thought became one of the ideological sources for the Meiji Restoration: it was before the westernization of the latter half of the nineteenth century that empire had been denied in terms of language and religion. As already implied, however, this denial is not unrelated to the world economy; and Motoori tacitly sensed the modern world-system.

It goes without saying that Motoori’s theory of language is different from that of the Romantics in Europe, for he disregarded the spoken language of his time. However, both theories prioritized speech and feelings over the language of empire, and laid the foundation of nationalism. This kind of theory is indispensable when a people attempts to gain independence from empire. Yet, when the nation-state expands itself into imperialism, this theory falls into a contradiction, which is revealed as a self-contradiction of linguistics, or rather of linguists. It is Tokieda Motoki who was keenly conscious of this contradiction.

Tokieda is known for his original language theory—language process theory, which criticizes Saussure—and on the other hand for his inheriting of traditional Japanese language studies. However, this description offers merely superficial aspects that are relatively conspicuous. Tokieda criticized Indo-European comparative linguistics, or historical linguistics, and assumed that Saussure also belonged to this trend. Western comparative, historical linguistics was introduced into Meiji Japan, and became the official linguistics of the state, under the leadership of Ueda Kazutoshi (1867–1932); he became the first professor of linguistics at the Imperial University of Tokyo and there established the Department of Japanese Language. Ueda called the Japanese language the “spiritual blood of the nation.” It is possible to say that, henceforth, this romantic kind of historical linguistics has maintained the discursive dominance in Japan. In fact, Japanese linguistics was not ignorant of Saussure; on the contrary, Saussure was translated in 1928 for the first time in the world by Kobayashi Hideo.¹³ *Course in General Linguistics* was published in France in 1916, and translated first into Japanese, then German (1931) and Russian (1933); the English translation was not published until 1959. The introduction of Saussure, however, did not change the foundation that had been formed by the previous linguistics; after Saussure, for example, Japanese as the national language has been considered a *langue*. Although the term changed, the old assumption that sought in language the externalization of the people’s spirit and

scientific laws did not change. Remembering the past, Tokieda, who studied under Ueda Kazutoshi, writes the following:

The new study of Japanese language after the Meiji period is based almost exclusively on the theory of Western linguistics, but it must be understood that unavoidable circumstances compelled this trend. Since it was an urgent necessity to attain the academic standard of the West anyhow, Japanese academia at that time busied themselves in importing the outlines of theories and glossing over their academic appearances at the least, rather than in examining the fundamental spirit of scientific studies. Thus the system of new Japanese Language Studies was built. Citing an example of grammar study, in the early Meiji period the grammar theory was developed by fitting Japanese into the structure of the Western grammar. It is undeniable that on the basis of this attitude there was a blind faith in the Western theories and overestimation of its universality. As stated before, this attitude is shown clearly by linguistics' theoretical critique of the history of traditional Japanese language studies. Yet, considering the fundamental spirit of the West's sciences, it can be found that the glorious achievement of Indo-European linguistics is nothing but the theory induced from each concrete phenomenon it objectifies; it is not a divine theory or revelation. The fundamental spirit taught by Western science is to engage oneself solely in the object. Seen from this perspective, it is no exaggeration to say that traditional Japanese language studies are based more firmly on the scientific mind than the Japanese language studies after Meiji are, which appropriated the scientific theories of the West.¹⁴

Tokieda criticized historical linguistics, which was then dominant, and appreciated "traditional Japanese language studies," that is, the *kokugaku* theory of language, which historical linguistics buried into oblivion. Through this attitude, however, Tokieda did not intend nationalism. On the contrary, he attempted to criticize the nationalism of Japanese language studies since the Meiji period. What lurks in this critique of the dominant linguistics is Tokieda's profound experience in the Korean Peninsula, where in 1927 he became an associate professor of Japanese language studies at the Imperial University of Seoul (and a full professor the next year). It is an experience of a contradiction that his mentor's (Ueda's) idea of the national language as the "spiritual blood of the nation"—a Romantic idea since Herder and Humboldt—could not escape in Korea.

If Dr. Ueda had proclaimed [the primacy of national language] on the Peninsula, the protection of the Korean language must necessarily be

prioritized. On the other hand, however, under the idea of the universal benevolence promotion of learning Japanese was considered a project of foremost importance. How can we solve this contradiction? Is there anything wrong in Dr. Ueda's view of the national language? Or is it wrong to promote Japanese as the national language? This is a critically important problem.¹⁵

This contradiction indicates that imperialism as expansion of nationalism cannot help evoking nationalism among the other peoples and colliding with it. It is not only linguists who encounter this contradiction, but insofar as the nation has its core in the national language, this is a contradiction most seriously inflicted on linguistics. In 1941, Tokieda published one of his major works, *Principles of Japanese Linguistics* [Kokugogaku genron], in which he refused to regard Japanese as the national language, that is, the language of the state or the people: Tokieda's intention consisted in conceiving Japanese in the Japanese Empire that included different peoples and languages, such as those of Taiwan, Korea, Ainu, and Okinawa.

In an age when Japanese language was congruent with the Japanese state and the Japanese people, there would have been no problem in defining the national language as the language spoken in the Japanese state and used by the Japanese people. Considering the current relationship between the state and the people or language, however, it is obvious that this definition of a national language is nothing but an expedient Today the objects of Japanese language studies could be various kinds of Japanese existing in remote regions, spoken beyond Japanese territory, or used by those who are not Japanese people. In these cases, the meaning of the name, Japanese, could transcend the state and the people; Japanese would be a general appellation for the languages furnished with the characteristics of Japanese language.¹⁶

Tokieda separates Japanese language from the people, and defines it as the "languages furnished with the characteristics of Japanese language." This idea no doubt emerged from his will to overcome the modern nation-state and linguistics as its support. Yet, Tokieda's view that Japanese language "transcends the state and the people" could not have been formed without the political situation and the philosophical movement of the time. When Tokieda sharply perceived the situation in which linguistics as the modern nation-state's support was no longer valid, he endeavored to overcome not only modern linguistics but also modern thought in general. His endeavor itself was, as we shall see later, a part of the zeitgeist that was called "overcoming modernity."

This is the context in which Tokieda criticized Saussure. For Tokieda, Saussure epitomizes the "theory of Western linguistics" and the modern

way of thinking. Tokieda argues that there are two postures toward language: the observational position and the subjective position. According to him, Saussurean linguistics assumes the observational position and regards language's existence as apart from the subject, but "language can never exist apart from the subject."¹⁷ "The observational position is possible only by presupposing the subjective position."¹⁸ Tokieda criticizes Saussurean linguistics as a constructionist linguistics lacking the subjective position and conceives a theory that regards language as a subjective process: the language process theory. In doing so, he insists that Saussure's thought remains not only within the limit of historical linguistics of the nineteenth-century West but also fundamentally within the limit of "Western thought." At the same time, while criticizing the Japanese linguists influenced by the historical linguistics of the West and Saussure, he finds that language theory developed by the scholars of national classics (*kokugaku*)—Motoori Norinaga and Suzuki Akira—of the latter half of the eighteenth century in the Edo period is based on the "subjective position."

Yet, Tokieda's critique is based on misunderstanding. Saussure emphasizes that linguistics must begin with the "speaking subject." For example, the phoneme is different from the physical voice. It is only insofar as the subject receives a meaning that the phoneme can be retrospectively found as a unit that discerns that meaning. Therefore, the phoneme is impossible without the *subject*. So is *langue*, which is a kind of methodological fiction found in the *subject* and does not exist objectively: it cannot be found from the objective position. In this respect, Saussure rejects historical linguistics' *natural scientific* way of thinking.

On the other hand, Saussure rejects the Romantic way of thinking that underlies historical linguistics. In this respect, he denies subjectivity. It is true that Saussure does not regard language as a *thing*, but he also recognizes language's materiality that is opaque to consciousness. Compared to Saussurean linguistics, Tokieda's language process theory goes no further than the Romantic—or more generally logocentric—idea of the West, that is, the idea that language should express the meaning that exists in the speaker's or writer's consciousness, and that through language the listener or reader can reach the mental process of the speaker or writer.

Tokieda criticized the linguistics of Japan, which mechanically applied a Western grammar, and appreciated language theory by the study of national classics (*kokugaku*) of the Tokugawa period. In this regard, however, Saussure is not necessarily contradictory to Tokieda. Saussure writes the following:

And, remarkably, theoretical observations of those who concentrate on special branches such as Germanic or Romance, occasion far more appreciation and interest than the observations of linguists who take on a wider series of

languages. It appears that smallest detail concerning a phenomenon is also its greatest rationalization, and hence extreme specialization alone may be usefully exploited in extreme generalization. It is not linguists like Friedrich Müller, of the University of Vienna, who take in more or less all the language of the world, who have ever contributed to what we know about language itself¹⁹

Saussure's "general linguistics" does not deal with language in "general"; it is impossible for such generality to contribute "to what we know about language itself." Therefore, Saussure would never oppose Tokieda's attempt to base his thought on the "extreme specialization" of Japanese grammar by the study of national classics (*kokugaku*). Nevertheless, Saussure knows that the objectification of a specific language would function mischievously in politics.

In this sense, Tokieda's criticism of Saussure is beside the point; he never thought that Saussure also stood in the same critical situation as he himself did. In the crisis, Saussure refused linguistics as such while Tokieda positively affirmed himself to be a linguist. Today, Tokieda's theory is not taken seriously within linguistics. Outside linguistics, however, it is rather appreciated concerning Japanese culture or thought. For instance, Nakamura Yujirō, arguing that Nishida Kitarō radically "deconstructs" Western Philosophy, states the following.

Nishida's "logic of place" [*basho no ronri*] deserves attention in two points. First, it unexpectedly illuminates the *logic of Japanese*. It is Tokieda Motoki's theory of Japanese grammar that alerts us to the fact that Nishida's "logic of place" is an embodiment of the logic of Japanese. Beginning with *Principles of Japanese Linguistics* in 1941, Tokieda built a full-blown language theory for the first time through the study of Japanese by referring to the traditional theory of language in Japan and critically adopting the Saussurean language theory. At the core of Tokieda's linguistics, there is what is called "language process theory" based on the traditional Japanese idea of language not as *mono* (the matter) but as *koto* (the event).

What makes explicit the literal connection between Tokieda's "language process theory" and Nishida's "logic of place" is the concept of "topos" [*bamen*] as the condition for the function of language. Tokieda's concept of "topos" does not refer to a purely objective world or a purely subjective world but to a world in which objectivity and subjectivity are fused into one another. As well as this concept of "topos," Tokieda's syntax, which comprehends Japanese at the point of a link between *shi* (the objective expression) and *ji* (the subjective expression), is also concerned with Nishida's "logic of place": a sentence in Japanese is a unity of *shi* objective expression and *ji* subjective expression, a unity in which the latter includes the former. Probed

from this direction, the elementary structure of Japanese syntax implicates a number of important points of view for the conception of the logic of Japanese.

Among them, I would mention four points. (1) In Japanese, being enveloped as a whole multiple times by *ji* at the ending, a sentence is normally affective more or less with subjectivity. (2) In Japanese, a sentence is linked by *ji* to the speaking subject and also to the scene of the subject, which binds the sentence. (3) Since it contains the fusion of the subject and object—*ji* and *shi*—in multiple layers, a Japanese sentence is suitable to deepen empirical language, but unsuitable to construct a world of objective or conceptual thinking. (4) In a Japanese sentence, because of the structure of the link between *shi* and *ji*, the true subject can be found in the function of *ji* while the existence of the formal subject in the syntax is not important.

These points not only indicate the basic characteristics of Japanese but also touch upon what is at issue in Nishida's "logic of place." It is especially the fourth point—the true subject is in the function of *ji*, and the syntactical subject is not important—which shows a thought that corresponds to Nishida's predicate logic, that is intimately connected to Nishida's idea of the "logic of place."²⁰

Yet, what Nakamura calls the "logic of Japanese" cannot be explained exclusively by Japanese grammar. As I have mentioned before, the mode of thinking that Nakamura described here cannot be found in other cultures that have languages with the same syntax as Japanese: the "logic of Japanese" is rooted rather in the historical experience in which Japanese accepted the language of empire in a particular way and invented writing that mixed Chinese characters and kana syllabary. Moreover, it is the scholars of national classics (*kokugaku*) in the latter half of the eighteenth century who had defined Japanese writing in terms of the distinction between *shi* and *ji*. Their linguistics is not *traditional* at all. The *kokugaku* scholars, though vaguely, were conscious of the "modern world-system," and in this sense saw the same problem as the German Romantics did. Nakamura, however, de-historicizes these historical elements as the "logic of Japanese."

Furthermore, Nakamura is not incorrect in finding the core of Nishida's philosophy in Tokieda's theory of Japanese grammar, but the order should be reversed: it is by using Nishida's philosophy as a clue that Tokieda could establish his theory of Japanese grammar. It is true that Tokieda does not cite Nishida's name but Husserl's when he criticizes linguistics' treatment of language as a "thing," but in fact Husserl became known in Japan through the Nishida school: even though there is no reference, it is undeniable that Tokieda was under Nishida's influence.

More importantly, not only was one of Tokieda's major works, *Principles of Japanese Linguistics*, published immediately after the beginning of the Pacific War—December 10th, 1941—almost at the same time as the symposia, “The World-Historical Positions and Japan,” by the Kyoto school philosophers and “Overcoming Modernity” by the Kyoto school and the Japanese Romantics, but also the book shares ideas with these symposia. Needless to say, the philosophers of the Kyoto school offered a philosophical ground for Japanese imperialism and its war, but not because they were imperialistic; rather they refused imperialism. After the First World War, since the “self-determination of peoples” was recognized, the imperialist states could not explicitly exercise cut-throat social Darwinism and were in need of an ideology that would justify their rule of other peoples. For example, the rule of Asia by the Japanese Empire needed to be considered as liberating Asian peoples from the Western powers and establishing the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere; it is for this purpose that Japanese intellectuals were attracted by the logic proposed by Nishida Kitarō and the philosophers of the Kyoto school—a logic that would overcome all of the modern nation-state, capitalism, and Soviet socialism.

When Marx wrote in “Theses on Feuerbach” that “the philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it,”²¹ the radical philosophers of the contemporary Hegelian left were in his mind. In a sense, the philosophers of the Kyoto school around Nishida Kitarō were radical, too; their words appear as if they were confronting imperialism. Nevertheless, what they have actually done is to interpret the Japanese Empire's imperialistic expansion as the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and this interpretation is precisely “overcoming modernity.”

For example, what Nishida called the “place of nothingness” was understood by Nishida himself politically as the following: “in the history of our country, the Imperial House has always been the being of nothingness, or contradictory self-identity.”²² In other words, according to Nishida, since it has no power politically, the Imperial House has always been the “being of nothingness” behind all the changes of the political powers, and remained so, unlike the Western or Chinese monarchs, even in the Meiji regime when the Emperor seemingly emerged as an absolute monarch. In Tokieda's words, the “place of nothingness” is a “zero sign,” which is not the subject but a function that unifies the whole under the predicate. By the same token, Nishida virtually affirmed that, in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the Emperor did not reign as a ruling power but was a “place of nothingness” or a “zero sign” that could unify independent monads of the Asian states. Clearly their thought changed only the “interpretation” concerning Japan's imperialistic rule of Asia.

Forgetting this past, Nakamura Yujirō appreciates Nishida as a deconstructionist of the West's modern philosophy. In the West, when Heidegger's significance in his deconstruction of modern philosophy is recognized, the fact of his commitment to Nazism is never ignored. In or outside Japan, however, those who appreciate Nishida and the Kyoto school completely de-politicize and de-historicize their philosophy. The same can be said about Tokieda. Although Nakamura tries to locate in Tokieda's language theory something deeply rooted in the Japanese people and culture, in fact Tokieda's project is to separate Japanese language from the Japanese people and culture. By doing so, he tries to overcome modern linguistics, but this overcoming is the same as the Kyoto school's "overcoming modernity." For instance, Tokieda writes the following:

The national language of Japan is a language that is specifically valued from the viewpoint of the state, but Japanese language is merely a linguistic object that is separated from that value and has the same status as Korean or other languages do. Therefore Japan's national language and Japanese have sometimes different contents. Dialects are linguistic objects that are as valuable as, or more valuable than, standard Japanese for the purpose of study; they also evoke nostalgia for our mother languages within us. However, the state considers these dialects as things that should be erased as much as possible. In this way the primacy of teaching a standard Japanese and national language emerges. The national language signifies the language of the Japanese state or the Japanese nation. The value of the national language from the state's viewpoint in comparison to dialects corresponds to its primacy over Korean. The primacy of the national language over dialects and Korean must be recognized because at its origin the national language is based on the form of the modern state. From this point we can start understanding the priority of Japanese in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.²³

It is clear that Tokieda's language theory cannot be separated from the idea of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Since imperialism is an expansion of the nation-state, it inevitably provokes the other nations' reactions. If this reality cannot be changed, then its interpretation should be changed: the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere transcends the modern idea of the nation-state and is a voluntary unification of peoples. Tokieda conceives the same idea in the realm of linguistics. The imperialistic state of Japan must force the Japanese language on other peoples. Having suffered from this contradiction, Tokieda concludes the following: if this reality cannot be changed, then its interpretation should be changed. That is to say, Japanese is a language "furnished with the characteristics of Japanese

language” without having necessary relationship with the Japanese people and culture; people learn Japanese only because it is a lingua franca. Yet it is needless to say that the reality was different: Japanese education was compulsory in the Japanese Empire, and it was English rather than Japanese that could actually be a lingua franca in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere.

However, can a national language be expanded as far as to be the language of empire—the lingua franca or the world language? This is the same question as whether a nation-state can be expanded as far as to be an empire. No doubt, the answer is negative. The consequence of the expansion is in fact nothing but *imperialism*. If there is such a thing as an empire without imperialism, it would be what Kant calls a “world republic,” which is formed by each state’s renunciation of sovereignty. Then what does this Kantian idea suggest in terms of language?

For example, in the age when the world religion was divided and too many nation-states were established, there were attempts to restore the principle of empire in new forms. Leibniz’s attempt was one of them. His philosophy is known for monadology, which indeed has political significations. It could implicate a political form in which each state as a monad is independent from each other but at the same time united as a whole. The symbolic logic he invented suggests his intention to linguistically overcome the mutual isolation of thoughts in the modern states. In fact, in his project of symbolic logic, he models it after Chinese characters, which are written language independent from spoken language.

This kind of enlightenment was denied by Romantics, and so was rational theory of language. For instance, the Linguistic Society of Paris, which had been established in 1865, banned presentations on the creation of the universal language, as well as on the origin of languages, under Article 2 of its bylaws. Gotō Hitoshi points out that this ban could be one of the reasons for linguists’ general neglect of the entire discussion concerning the international language.²⁴ Whatever linguists insisted, however, the movement toward the creation of the universal language never ceased in the age of imperialism.

For example, Esperanto was first presented in 1887 by Zamenhof, a Jewish ophthalmologist in Russian Poland. A few years later, Saussure returned to Geneva, but his thorough critique of historical linguistics and the creation of Esperanto are not unrelated. In fact, in his lectures, Saussure reportedly treated Esperanto as a language as empirical as Chinese.²⁵ Today, on the other hand, the prejudice that considers those who study the universal language disqualified as linguists prevails. In addition to this prejudice, under global capitalism, English becomes more

and more influential as an international lingua franca while a universal language does not appear to be needed. Nevertheless, since English is the national language in several countries, it cannot be a universal language. Organizations, such as the United Nations, should initiate a project to create a universal language.²⁶

6

GEOPOLITICS OF THE CHARACTER

Japan-Psycho-Analysis

I

Japan belongs to the Chinese Empire or its civilization, and yet it has significantly different elements than those of Chinese civilization. Toynbee, therefore, treats Japan as another civilization independent from the Chinese; Huntington, too, regards Japan by itself as one of the seven existing civilizations. This kind of view is expressed whenever Japan's difference from China is emphasized. Yet, it is an undoubted fact that Japan, along with Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia, has belonged to Chinese culture—*bunka*—from ancient times. In China, *bunka* implies the use of (Chinese) characters. Without acknowledging the fact of these shared characters in East Asia, there is no such thing as Japan's uniqueness, which can be found, whether in ancient or modern times, in its relationship to the empire or civilization.

Japan has belonged to the Chinese Empire, but, in terms of politics and culture, it has been independent since antiquity. The reason is clear: unlike other countries contiguous to China, Japan was a remote insular nation. Essentially the empire does not concern itself with what the peoples do under its rule, as long as they pay tribute, whereas the nation-state forces homogeneity. Hence, remote Japan did not have to declare independence. It is with Motoori Norinaga, a *kokugaku*—the study of national classics—scholar of the latter eighteenth century, that the Japanese began asserting their independence from the empire of China. Reaching back to antiquity, Motoori attempted to show how different Japan had been from China, although he did so not in order to achieve independence from China but to refute Neo-Confucianism, which was the official ideology of the shogunate.

The ancient Japanese did not defy Chinese culture or try to be independent from it. They did what was contrary to Chinese culture, but they did not intend to do so. They simply did not do what they could not do. For example, among the laws imported from China in the seventh century, there was a law that inhibited consanguineous marriage, but the Japanese ignored the law. From the Chinese viewpoint, Japanese consanguineous matrimony would be considered as equivalent to that of the beasts. The Japanese did not abolish the law, which they had imported, but merely ignored it. As we shall see later, this coexistence of respect and disregard marks *the Japanese-like* (*Nihonteki na mono*).

Again, in any period of history, Japan has always accepted and respected the culture of the Chinese Empire as advanced and normative, but at the same time it has been disregarded. This attitude has been possible because Japan is geopolitically far from China. From the viewpoint of world history, we must regard this attitude as one of the phenomena that occurred at the peripheries of various empires.

For example, in *Eurocentrism*, Samir Amin takes issue with the view that the history of the West is unbroken from Ancient Greece to the present. The Eurocentric view represses not only the fact that modern Europe was impossible without the medieval Arabic civilization, but also the fact that Ancient Greece, which is supposed to be the origin of Europe, was as such an insular nation at the periphery of Egypt, an advanced country.¹

Amin finds the origin of the West in Egypt not because he tries to emphasize Egypt's originality, still less because he is an Egyptian. According to Amin's theory, an empire such as Egypt was rigid and stagnant because it was already complete, while Greece, a coastal, peninsular country that remained incomplete at the periphery of the empire, was able to develop its culture more flexibly and freely. Moreover, Amin finds that this relationship between Egypt and Greece is analogous to not only the relationship between the Western European empires and insular Britain at their periphery, but also the relationship between China and insular Japan at its periphery. Amin argues that in these peripheral states, in which the system remained incomplete, capitalism developed. These peripheral states, insular ones in particular, did not have to consume energy in order to maintain their borders, and, accepting anything from the outside and managing it pragmatically, were able to be creative without being bound by traditional, normative forces.² To Amin's examples, I'd like to add the United States of America as an insular nation at the periphery of the empire.

It is thus clear that what characterizes *the Japanese-like* is generally derived from the fact that Japan is an insular country at the far-east periphery of Chinese civilization. Negative or affirmative, those who examine *the Japanese-like* compare Japan with Western Europe or China, but we should

compare Japan with those peripheral states of the European empire or the Chinese empire.

For example, Maruyama Masao, a political scientist, has investigated the intellectual history of Japan by using that of Europe as a standard. According to Maruyama, in Japanese intellectual history, there is neither principle that could serve as a coordinate axis to measure individual ideas nor orthodoxy that could bring heterodoxy into being; all foreign ideas are accepted and cohabitant spatially, but due to the absence of a clash of principles, there is no development or accumulation of ideas.³ In other words, ideas imported from the outside are never “repressed” but merely “cohabitant” in a place. A new idea is preserved without being challenged, essentially, and taken suddenly out of the reserve when another new idea arrives. Thus in Japan anything goes. This is what Maruyama calls “Shinto”: “as if it were a cloth tube flatly stretching lengthwise, Shinto has filled its doctrinal contents by *syncretizing* itself with the dominant religion of each age. No doubt the aforementioned *tradition* of Japanese thought is compactly expressed by Shinto’s *infinite embrace* and cohabitation of ideas.”⁴

On the other hand, Takeuchi Yoshimi, a sinologist, has criticized Japan in comparison to China. In contact with the modern West, there were reactionary “resistances” to it in Asian countries, China in particular, but Japan did not resist but achieved “modernization” smoothly because, according to Takeuchi, in Japan there was no “self” that should “resist.” Takeuchi’s view agrees with that of Maruyama, who has insisted on the lack of a coordinate axis in Japanese thought. In theory, the presence of a coordinate axis brings “stagnation” rather than “development.” The secret of Japan’s “development” consists in the absence of self or principle. Takeuchi holds that, in spite of temporary stagnation, China’s persistence in the principle is preferable and closer to the West.⁵

Yet, it is because Europe—particularly France—and China are empires in the sense described by Amin that, compared with Japan, they appear similar to each other. In this respect, Japan is similar to Great Britain that is located at the periphery of Europe. Therefore, we should compare Japan with Great Britain, and then find differences. Maruyama and Takeuchi have criticized Japan’s modernization for its superficiality. Needless to say, however, both inside and outside Japan, there are numerous critics who comment favorably on Japan regarding its economic development that is exceptional among non-Western countries. In this case, what most of these proponents of Japan refer to is the flexible pragmatism and aesthetic sensibility of the Japanese. Motoori Norinaga had already emphasized the subtlety and flexibility of Japanese thought—*yamato gokoro*, or the Japanese mind—in opposition to Chinese thought—*kara gokoro*, or the Chinese mind—that persists in the coordinate axis or the principle. He has

criticized radicalism that attempts to bring about changes hastily, calling it “*kara gokoro*” (Chinese mind).

Maruyama’s point concerning Japanese thought is merely a negative comprehension of what Motoori has positively seen in it. In other words, we can judge favorably Maruyama’s description of Japanese thought. For instance, Maruyama argues that in Japan foreign cultures are never excluded but cohabitant, and that, even if denied, they are preserved temporarily and will be taken out when necessary. Okakura Kakuzō, however, has already appreciated Japan as Asia’s “repository” or “museum”⁶; Watsuji Tetsuro has also seen *the Japanese-like* in its “tolerance.”

Since the seventh or eighth century, Buddhism has deeply pervaded Japanese culture and thought, but nevertheless Buddhism is considered *foreign thought* in Japan even today. Watsuji perceives this as strange. He compares it to the West’s reception of Christianity. For the Germanic peoples, Christianity was a foreign thought, but since it was adopted by repressing the previous non-Christian elements completely, they could never be conscious of it as foreign. Moreover, it took long for Europe to adopt Christianity because of this repression whereas Buddhism rooted and bloomed as soon as it was transplanted to Japan. Watsuji describes this as follows.

Besides the non-militant nature of Buddhism itself, we must find here Japanese’s own tolerance in religion: they did not perceive that their faith in *kami*—the indigenous deities—should be renounced in order to be converted to Buddhism. As seen obviously even today, it has never been contradictory for an ardent believer to worship both *kami* and Buddha, although this generosity might also appear as the lack of thoroughness in the faith. Thus the Buddhization of Japanese did not become a conversion, which signified complete denial of non-Buddhist elements; rather Buddhism was appropriated by Japanese. Consequently, ever since Buddhism became the flesh and blood of Japanese culture centuries ago, it has always been possible to regard it as a foreign thought.⁷

Watsuji is mistaken in referring to the “non-militant nature of Buddhism itself” as one of the reasons for its precipitous pervasion in Japan. Among the Buddhist scriptures, there is such a text as the Lotus Sutra, which is “militant” and exclusive, and which did and still does cause movements of such nature in Japan. Moreover, Buddhism is a radical thought born in India, and its transplant also demanded “complete denial of non-Buddhist elements.” In fact, it could not avoid its own disappearance in India; in China, it uniquely developed into Zen and the Pure Land, but these sects also disappeared except for their ruins. In Thailand, Cambodia, Tibet,

and Nepal, in which Buddhism still exists, it is internalized with rigorous laws and never treated as a “foreign thought.” Then why is Buddhism still a “foreign thought” in Japan, in which all the sects that were introduced in the past are existent? It is imprecise to attribute the cause to “Japanese’s own tolerance in religion” or to argue that “Buddhism was appropriated by Japanese.”

Under each empire in the world, people were “castrated” by world religion, whether in the case of Christianity, Islam, or Buddhism. In those regions, it is impossible to consider world religion as foreign to one’s self; this is because the very idea of the self has been formed as such by world religion. On the other hand, even if, as Watsuji claims, Buddhism was “appropriated” by the Japanese, it does not mean that before the appropriation there had been any kind of the *self* that could possess the religion. Rather, the *self* was not formed because, put in Lacan’s words, the Japanese foreclosed the castration. This foreclosure does not contradict the fact that Buddhism rooted itself in Japan immediately, without resistance. That is to say, unlike the European “tolerance” that has been developed through religious wars, the reception of anything is a form of foreclosure or exclusion. As a result, Buddhism permeates everywhere but at the same time remains foreign.

Maruyama later attempted in his analysis of *Kojiki* [Record of Ancient Matters] to locate the origin of “Japanese thought” by archeologically tracing it back to antiquity.⁸ What he found in the “ancient stratum” is a thought that prioritizes becoming over making. In this conclusion, Maruyama presupposes that making is privileged in the West. It is not the case, however, that making has always been privileged since the beginning of the West. For example, F. M. Cornford argues that in ancient Greece the “evolutionary” (becoming) idea was more dominant, and that only a minority, such as Plato, privileged the “creational” (making).⁹ The idea of making was imported from advanced Egypt; the European peoples, in the ancient stratum before their encounter with Judeo-Christian religion, also prioritized becoming over making. It is only after the introduction of Christianity that becoming was repressed completely. The same can be said of the Asian peoples. Situated at the periphery of the Chinese or Indian empires, they thoroughly repressed what they had previously maintained when they adopted the empires’ influences.

Hence the priority of becoming over making in the ancient stratum of history does not characterize Japan. Ethnicities at the peripheries of such empires as China or India also prioritized becoming. It is therefore more important to ask why such an “ancient stratum” was not repressed in Japan than to point out the existence of the stratum.

I would argue that what seems to be characteristic of Japan would be clearer in comparison to peripheral maritime states, such as Greece or Great Britain, than to the Empire of Europe or China. We must pay attention to the fact that, although Greeks and Britons were remarkably flexible and creative from the modern viewpoint, they did not take special pride in those qualities. On the contrary, their intellectuals were ashamed of themselves for their deviance from the imperial norms. In Greece, for example, Plato did not appreciate the democracy that Athens developed by itself; he held that Egypt was superior as a political form.

Similarly, Japanese achieved different accomplishments from Chinese, which were later appreciated as an original culture, but in no way did they consider that their culture deserved the appreciation. The intellectuals were particularly dismissive. For instance, *ukiyo-e*, which was received with enthusiasm by mid-nineteenth-century Europe, was despised by the contemporary intellectuals in Japan, for whom art based on the Chinese model was superior. Likewise, in the nineteenth-century United States, US intellectuals scorned what Americans were practicing, as is shown by Emerson's lecture, "The American Scholar." What Emerson called "transcendentalism" suggests the end of dependence on European books and the beginning of thinking based on one's own intuition and practice. As it were, it is a US version of *kokugaku* (the study of national classics).

One of the great differences between Japan and Great Britain is, however, the fact that while Great Britain is contiguous to the Continental empire or France across the channel, there is Korea between Japan and the continent. Consequently, while Great Britain was militarily invaded several times by different peoples even before the Norman Conquest, there was no such invasion of Japan. Numerous tribes have come over to the Japanese islands, but there was no military invasion. For the Korean Peninsula, situated between Japan and China, Mongolia, or Russia, has blocked military invasions. Mongolia, which quickly conquered the huge amount of space from China to the Arabian Peninsula in the fourteenth century, spent thirty years bringing the Korean Peninsula under its control. Mongolians gave up the conquest of Japan not because, as purported in Japanese history, the divine wind known as a *kamikaze* —which was in fact a typhoon—blew, but because they were already exhausted by Korean resistance. The presence of Korea has determined the forms of Japanese politics and culture from antiquity to the present.

After the Second World War, Japanese intellectuals began by asking themselves why they could not resist fascism and the war. This questioning is not only a matter of each individual's ethics but also an attempt to recognize the socio-cultural structure of Japan that brought about fascism and the war. Maruyama was the first to investigate this issue essentially.

He did not reduce it to the problem of fascism in general; rather he probed Japanese fascism by comparing it with Germany's Nazism. Nazism at least assumes the articulate will and subject, which makes responsibility possible, but in Japanese fascism there is no distinct political subject that could take on responsibility, and, therefore, no sense of responsibility. In Japan, the action was certainly performed, but it seems as if no one was its subject and what would happen happened. Maruyama called this structure the "system of irresponsibility" or "structure of the Emperor system."

Thus the ruling class of Japan—the Emperor, bureaucrats, and bourgeois—never assumed the sense of responsibility. As a result, strangely, nothing in Japan can explain the positive thrust—in the normal sense—that prosecuted the war other than the apparatus of the Emperor system itself. This point needs to be explicated in terms of social science. Otherwise, two extreme fallacies would prevail: one fallacy unifies the subject of the war exclusively into the monopolistic capital and monistically imputes everything to it while the other proclaims everyone's innocence except for the young officers and the field officers of the military. In short, in order to probe the problem of the ruling class's war responsibility, it is important to explicate the mechanism of the Emperor system itself and its profound pathology in Japan.¹⁰

Yet, where does this system come from? Fascism emerged in the crisis of modern capitalism, and if we attempt to fathom the cause of its Japanese form, it is necessary to investigate not only the fundamental structure after the Meiji period but also the one prior to it. In fact, Maruyama and many others investigated it, but their investigation was beside the point because, by comparing Japan with China or the West, they tried to understand the *essence* of Japan. However, it is impossible to understand *the Japanese-like* without taking into account its relation to Korea from antiquity to the present. As far as I know, it is Sakaguchi Ango, a novelist, who made precise comments on the emperor system. He had a perspective in which the ancient history of Japan was a political continuation of the Korean Peninsula.

The Emperor system has been a system that runs through Japanese history, but the authority of the Emperor has always been a mere instrument for power and never existed as such. Why did the Fujiwara Clan or the shogunates need the Emperor system? Why didn't they assume sovereignty by themselves? It is because the Emperor system was more convenient than their own assumption of the sovereignty: they knew that their command could be spread more effectively by making the Emperor issue the command, to which they pretended to be subject, rather than by issuing it by

themselves to the public It is impossible to proclaim oneself a deity and demand the people's respect, but it is quite possible to make a deity out of the Emperor by kowtowing to him and forcing him on the people. So, selecting an emperor at will, they kowtowed before him, and by this kowtowing demanded respect for the emperor. Because of that respect, the people could be commanded to obey. This is not a story of Clan Fujiwara or samurai in the remote past. Look, it is this war.¹¹

According to Sakaguchi, the Emperor system continues its existence in Japan not because its mythical power is deeply rooted but because Japanese have never been directly ruled by other peoples. As a result, all rulers did not grasp the absolute power by themselves but, in order to secure their grounds of power, chose to worship the emperor, who held the authority of the previous age. It is difficult to maintain a regime only with violence, but with authority it is possible to economize violence. This is the universal law of governance, as Machiavelli has pointed out in *The Prince*. Therefore, there is no mysterious secret in the continuance of Japan's emperor system. In fact, the emperor's authority was used not only by Japanese rulers but also by the US army of occupation after the war. The latter politically acquitted the emperor of war responsibility in order to employ him as a strategy against the Soviet Union. Having resurrected as an economic power, consequently, Japan kept the "structure of the Emperor system" intact.

On the other hand, Korea, which is contiguous to China and exposed to its political and cultural pressure, has a tendency to be more fundamental and systematic than China. Choi Won-shik, a Korean literary critic, writes the following.

To put it bluntly, in the current of our intellectual history, an extreme tendency that derives from the somewhat anomalous character has not been absent. A strong temptation to the dictatorship of intolerant ideology that, distinguishing orthodoxy from heterodoxy, condemns any aberration from the orthodoxy as a "rebel" and tries to eradicate it! Once Chang Yu (1587–1638) could not stop lamenting: "Chinese scholarship varies from the orthodoxy to Zen and Dan. Some learn Neo-Confucianism, and others the teachings of Wang Yang-ming; there is more than one path. Yet, in our country, an intellectual or not, everyone who can read holds a book and only memorizes Neo-Confucianism without knowing there is any other teaching They vainly talk about Neo-Confucianism and appreciate it superficially only because it is respected in public. If there is no heterodoxy, can there be any orthodoxy?" (*Kyegok manp'il*, vol. 1).¹²

In fact, it is the scholars of the Yi dynasty in sixteenth century Korea who restored Neo-Confucianism, which had already been extinct in China after the Manchurian conquest of the Ming dynasty. The Korean scholars flattered themselves that they were the true successors of Chinese culture. It is around this period that Confucianization of Korea was completed. The Tokugawa shogunate introduced Neo-Confucianism as the official ideology, but it was actually Korean Neo-Confucianism which was taught by those Korean scholars who visited Japan as delegates throughout the Tokugawa period. This fact was forgotten after the Meiji Period. Maruyama also ignored this in his *Studies in the Intellectual History of Tokugawa Japan*, which investigates the dialectics of intellectual development from Neo-Confucianism to the study of national classics (*kokugaku*) in the Tokugawa period, although he corrected the omission in his introduction to the English version.

Even in China, neither Confucianism nor Neo-Confucianism was as rigorous as they were in Korea. Considering these facts, what Motoori called the “Chinese mind” (*kara gokoro*)—excessively rigorous persistence in the principle and system, and repression of subtle differences of reality—should have been indeed called the “Korean spirit” (*kara gokoro*).¹³ The point is, in any case, not that there are merely differences of thought between China, Korea, and Japan, but that these differences have been historically formed by the geopolitical relationship.

II

Motoori Norinaga never insisted that Japan had any positive principle that could match the religions, morals, or intellectual systems of China and India. He sought the originality of Japan in the subtle sensibility, such as “sensitiveness to beauty” (*mono no aware*), that appeared empty in terms of understanding and morality. On the other hand, Korean nationalism is characterized by its endeavor to be more Chinese than China itself. Motoori’s idea of “Japanese mind” (*yamato gokoro*) is evidently aesthetic and denies moral and intellectual attitudes. I would like to reflect on this problem in terms of linguistics, but my method does not consist of explaining the Japanese way of thinking through Japanese grammar. Such a grammatical explanation forgets the fact that both Korean and Japanese are Altaic (agglutinative) languages.

Tokieda Motoki favored Motoori’s linguistic theories over Japanese language studies following the Meiji period, which had applied English grammar mechanically to Japanese. Motoori distinguished between *shi* (words),

which have a signifying semantic content, and *ji* (linking elements), such as *joshi* (particles) and *jodōshi* (auxiliary verbs) which, though having no content of meaning, manifest affective values. He compared *ji*—the particles of *te*, *ni*, *wo*, *wa*—to a string that holds together the jewels (*shi*). That is to say, *ji* corresponds to what is called copula in Indo-European languages. Tokieda holds that, while in Western languages the subject and predicate are like two poles supported by the verb “to be,” in Japanese the objective expression (*shi*) is always enveloped in the subjective expression (*ji*), and thereby form a unity.

However, Tokieda’s distinction between words and linking elements, or the claim that words are enveloped by linking elements, is not elicited solely by the characteristics of Japanese syntax, in which the meaning of the whole sentence is determined at its ending. If such were the case, why didn’t the same concept emerge from other Altaic languages which possess the same syntax, such as Korean? The answer is simple. The distinction between words and linking elements is rooted in Japanese writing, in which Chinese characters and the *kana* syllabary are used together. Those parts which correspond to concepts—that is, words—are inscribed in Chinese characters, and those which correspond to particles and auxiliary verbs are inscribed in Japanese *kana* syllabic symbols. This distinction itself is based on a historical convention in writing. Motoori’s language theory finds knowledge and morals introduced from China in words (*shi*) and the Japanese spirit (*yamato gokoro*) in linking elements (*ji*).

Motoori assumes that *Kojiki* is an oral record of history, and precedes *Nihon shoki* [Chronicles of Japan], which is written in Chinese, both in chronology and importance. Yet, the idea of writing a history is as such derived from China and Korea; without Chinese and its characters, it is impossible to write it. Therefore we should assume that *Kojiki* was produced by translating into Japanese what had been already written and formed in Chinese. Oral transmission cannot form a complex structure. Maruyama paid attention to the content expressed in *Kojiki*, but completely failed to problematize its form. That is to say, he did not put into question the historicity of writing as such, by which *history* is written. This historicity can be shown by observing the difference between Korea and Japan in their receptions of Chinese characters.

In ancient East Asia, it is only China that had writing. If the peoples at the periphery of China have any culture—*bunka*, or use of characters—it means that they have adopted Chinese characters. However, there were difficulties for peoples of agglutinative languages in adopting these characters that were suitable for Chinese, which was an isolating language. Chinese characters are both ideographical and phonetic. Those peoples who adopted Chinese characters in antiquity accepted the Chinese words

as such, and at the same time used the characters phonetically in order to express their own (spoken) languages. Within the Chinese cultural sphere, it is not only Japan that produced their own syllabary from Chinese characters; among others, chũ nôm, Tangut scripts, Khitan scripts, Jurchen scripts, and Korean Idu were also created. In fact, it is assumed that the use of *man'yōgana* of the seventh century—the phonetic use of Chinese characters, by which the *Man'yō-shu* and *Kojiki* were written—was originally invented in Korea and developed in Japan by immigrants from the Korean Peninsula. Later, around the ninth century, Japanese *hiragana* and *katakana* phonetic signs spontaneously developed from the simplification of *man'yōgana*, of which usage had been customarily fixed.

In Korea, instead of spontaneous development, the Hangul alphabet—an artificial system of writing—was devised as national policy in the fifteenth century. In Japan, *man'yōgana*'s phonetic use of Chinese characters was transformed into the *kana* syllabary because Japanese has less vowels and consonants and uses open syllables—Japanese syllables always end with a vowel. Since Korean has more vowels and consonants, it was necessary to devise a way to combine a vowel and a consonant, as the Roman alphabet does. However, the great difference between Korean and Japanese is the fact that in Japan a Chinese character is read both in *on*—pronunciation closer to the Chinese original—and *kun*—Japanese pronunciation—whereas in Korea it is read only in *on* but never in *kun*—in this case, in Korean pronunciation. Furthermore, in Japanese, corresponding to regional pronunciations in China, there are multiple *on* readings for each character, but in Korean each character has only one pronunciation. After the Second World War, both North and South Korea have attempted to virtually abolish Chinese characters and use the Hangul alphabet exclusively; this is possible probably because in Korean each Chinese character has only one pronunciation, which can be written by one Korean phonetic sign. If the Chinese characters were transcribed to Japanese *kana* syllabary, they would be difficult to read because of their increased length.

What do *kun* readings of Chinese characters mean? First, it is the internalization of the foreign characters. Japanese are no longer conscious that they read foreign Chinese in the way of *kun* readings; instead they assume that they write Japanese simply by using Chinese characters. In contrast, in Korea, Chinese characters have always been external because they are read only as *on*. The Korean intellectual tried to write in foreign Chinese, and continued to do so even after the introduction the Hangul alphabet. In Japan, however, the mixture of Chinese and Japanese characters was standardized around the twelfth century, and Chinese writing could be read in the Japanese way. As a result, there were very few who could write in correct Chinese.

Second, and more importantly, because of *kun* readings, Chinese characters are absorbed within Japanese internally, but at the same time they always remain external. For example, what is written in Chinese characters is considered foreign and abstract. This system became more complicated in Japanese writing after the Meiji period. Western ideas were at first translated into Japanese by using Chinese characters—these translations were standardized not only in Korea, which was eventually colonized by Japan, but also in China, which sent many students to Japan after the Sino-Japanese War. At the same time, however, another method was adopted: these ideas were transcribed in *katakana* phonetic signs. Since *katakana* phonetic signs were used as supplements to read Chinese, such as the Buddhist scriptures, it can be said that *katakana* signs were suitable for indicating foreign words.

At present, Western ideas are rarely translated, but transcribed by *katakana* phonetic signs. In speech, the foreignness of a foreign word passes unnoticed, but in writing it becomes explicit by the phonetic signs. Also, for the purpose of defamiliarization, a Japanese word, which is supposed to be written in *hiragana* phonetic signs or Chinese characters, is sometimes written in *katakana* signs. That is to say, as long as it is written in the Chinese character or *katakana* phonetic signs, the foreignness of the foreign is preserved. As I stated before, Watsuji notices that in Japan Buddhism forever remains “foreign thought” even if it permeates Japan thoroughly. Now the reason is obvious: in Japan Buddhism exists in Chinese characters or *katakana* phonetic signs.

What is expressed in Chinese characters or *katakana* phonetic signs not only has a certain value but also causes a certain reaction corresponding to it. It is implicitly distinguished from *Yamato kotoba*—a Japanese word—even if it becomes familiar in *parole* (spoken language), and even if it is impossible to speak without it. *Yamato kotoba* is not necessarily an original Japanese word, but it merely means a word of which the origin is forgotten, wherever it is from, and which is familiar enough to be written in *hiragana* phonetic signs. Today, along with Chinese characters, *hiragana*, and *katakana* phonetic signs, the Roman alphabet is also used quite often. Perhaps nowhere other than in Japan exists a group of people which distinguishes the origin of a word by using various kinds of character; they have been doing so for more than a thousand years. Without taking these characteristics into account, it is impossible to understand not only literature but also systems and ideas in Japan, since it is precisely writing that makes the systems and ideas possible.

As stated above, Maruyama has insisted that any kind of foreign idea may be accepted into Japan but will only cohabitate and never affect its

inner core. This system is most evident in the form of the use of characters. Whatever is accepted does not matter because a foreign idea will remain foreign once it is admitted and written in Chinese characters or *katakana* phonetic signs. Any foreign idea, whatever it may be, is acceptable because it is at first internalized into the Japanese language; but because in writing it is distinguished by Chinese characters and *katakana* signs, it cannot be internalized in essence nor challenged but merely set aside as foreign. As a result, everything foreign is preserved in Japan.

In this respect, I would like to mention Lacan's comments on Japan. Lacan seems to be very interested in the Japanese usage of characters, and refers to it thrice. For example, in his foreword to the Japanese edition of *Écrits*, Lacan asserts that no one who uses characters as the Japanese do "needs to be analyzed." Moreover, he goes as far as to say to Japanese readers that he wants them to close his book as soon as they read the foreword. Lacan pays attention to the Japanese *kun* readings of Chinese characters.

For the truly speaking beings, the *on* reading is sufficient to comment on the *kun* reading. The waffle iron that these two readings make with one another—it is the well-being of those who the iron forms, when they emerge from the iron as fresh as hot waffles. Not everyone has the good fortune to speak Chinese in one's own language, for that would be a dialect, or especially—and this is a point needing more emphasis—to have borrowed writing from a language so foreign that it makes tangible at every moment the distance from thought, that is to say, from the unconscious, to *parole*. That is the gap so dangerous for the international languages that are pertinent to psychoanalysis. If I did not fear being misunderstood, I would say that for those who speak Japanese it is a common performance to tell the truth *by* lying, to tell lies *without being* a liar.¹⁴

What does it mean that the *on* reading is sufficient to comment on the *kun* reading? It means that Japanese speech can immediately be translated into a form of Chinese characters. In other words, the meaning of a word can be known not only by speech but also by the expression of Chinese characters. The reason for Lacan's conclusion from this that Japanese do not need psychoanalysis probably lies in Freud's understanding of the unconscious in terms of the *hieroglyph*. If psychoanalysis consists in becoming conscious of the unconscious, it would also bring the unconscious into phonetic languages and decipher hieroglyphics in the unconscious. In Japanese, as it were, the hieroglyphics themselves emerge into consciousness, and the distance from the unconscious to the *parole* is tangible. Therefore, it

follows that there is no repression for Japanese because they always expose the unconscious, or the hieroglyphics—that is to say, they always speak the truth.

Lacan does not attempt to explain the Japanese people psychologically. He is interested in the Japanese language because it indicates in its writing the limit of psychoanalysis, as Freud sees the limit of psychoanalytic treatment in psychosis, which Freud calls narcissistic neurosis, and in which there is no transference to the analyst. Concerning psychosis, Lacan proposes the idea of “foreclosure,” which is distinguished from repression. It is foreclosure of primary repression or, in other words, foreclosure of castration. Castration establishes a subject by repression, but at the same time entails the cause for neurosis. On the other hand, foreclosure of castration prevents the subject from being fully constructed, and causes something like the psychosis of schizophrenia.

The difference between Korea and Japan would be clearer through the problem of the character. In Korea, there was castration in its reception of Chinese characters, but there was not in Japan. What happened in Korea is a general phenomenon that happens in the encounter with a country of advanced civilization. In this sense, Koreans are closer to Westerners than to Japanese; or Westerners can understand Koreans more easily than Japanese. Needless to say, what Lacan calls “castration” means entrance into the Symbolic, that is, into the world of language (*bunka*). But the *kun* reading is a path both to enter and not to enter the Symbolic. Such foreclosure of castration occurred in Japan. If there is such a thing as *the Japanese-like*, it should be only at this point. Most theories of Japanese, favorably or unfavorably, point to the lack of a firm subject and of a fundamental axis. This lack is more schizophrenic than neurotic.

III

The three kinds of writing—Chinese characters, *hiragana*, and *katakana* phonetic signs—still exist and function in Japan today. These are situated at the inmost core in interrogating *the Japanese-like*. I disagree with an idealism that, without considering the use of characters as the historical form, assumes the essence of so-called mind, idea, or culture, and also identity, by abstracting Japan from its relations to other countries. For example, in the Taishō period, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, a novelist contemporary with Watsuji, attempted to understand the intellectual situation of the day by tracing it back to the “ancient stratum.” In his short story, “The Faint Smiles of the Gods,” “one of the spirits” in Japan appears in a fantasy of a Jesuit missionary, and tells that every thought from the outside, such

as Buddhism or Confucianism, was transformed in Japan. Then he warns as follows:

Wait, please attend a moment. Deus is not the only one who has come to this land from afar. Confucius, Mencius, Chuang-tzu—and any number of other philosophers from China made their way to this land. Moreover, at that time this land had just been born. Besides the way, the philosophers from China brought various things—silk from the State of Wu and jewels from the State of Ch'in. And they even brought their wondrous written characters, more precious than those jewels. But was China able to subjugate us for all that? Take characters for example. Rather than conquering us, characters were conquered for our benefit. A native I knew long ago was a poet called Kakinomoto no Hitomaro However, I must speak not of those poems but of written characters. To write down those poems Hitomaro used Chinese characters. But he used the characters for the sound rather than for their meaning. Even after the character “vessel” arrived, we still normally say “boat.” Otherwise our language would probably have become Chinese. Of course it was not Hitomaro himself who did this; rather, it was our powers, the Gods of this land, who safeguarded his heart.¹⁵

Perhaps Deus Himself will be transformed into a native of this land. China and India were transformed. The West too will have to be transformed. We are in the trees. And in the flow of shallow waters. And in wind which sweeps over the roses. And in the evening light which lingers on temple walls. We are everywhere and always. Beware. Beware¹⁶

Akutagawa describes a fantasy of a Jesuit missionary of the sixteenth century, but in fact this fantasy could also imply the consequence of Christianity in the later Meiji period and what would happen to the Marxist movement, which was then flourishing and in a sense threatening him. More notably, however, when Akutagawa names the foreign religions and thoughts that were absorbed and annulled in Japan, the problem of writing is first mentioned. However, when Kawai Hayao, a Jungian psychologist, states the following, he merely repeats what Akutagawa wrote metaphorically, under the rubric of “science” without the keen sense of history that informs the novelist.

It is acknowledged that Japanese are ingenious at adopting foreign cultures. Foreign-born thoughts and arts are quickly imported and become *fashionable*. After a while, however, the temporarily rising, fashionable thought suddenly falls down and disappears. Then another new fashion appears. Thus while it seems as if Western thoughts and arts are flourishing, they are all Japanized once having gone through the womb of the Japanese Great Mother. This is also related to Isaiah Ben-Dasan's comment that the only religion in Japan is *Nihonkyo*—the religion of Japan.¹⁷

From the viewpoint of Westerners, it does not seem certain whether or not the ego exists in Japanese. A foreigner once said that negotiation with the Japanese was difficult because the individual's judgment and the site of responsibility were never evident. Without making clear judgments, Japanese often answer, "I need to talk with my boss." But then the boss says, "I need to talk with my men," and the negotiation becomes more confused.¹⁸

Kawai's argument has already been pointed out by Maruyama and many others. For example, the second paragraph indicates the prevalence of the "system of irresponsibility," which became evident through the Tokyo Tribunal that tried the war criminals of Japan. Then what is the cause of this system? Kawai attributes it to Japan's "maternal society." However, this is a vague idea both historically and sociologically, and he takes into account exclusively "Westerners" and "Japanese." Completely devoid of historical investigation, Kawai explains the current situation *psychologically*. Even Akutagawa's "spirit" of Japan could be a better explanation than "the womb of the Japanese Great Mother." Furthermore, Kawai broaches "the structure of the Japanese ego."

Considering these points, I have boldly diagrammed the psychical structures of Japanese and Westerners. . . . That is to say, in the case of Westerners, the ego exists at the center of consciousness, and, thus maintaining consistency, has a link to the self at the bottom of the psyche. By contrast, Japanese have no clear boundary between consciousness and the unconscious; and since the structure of their consciousness is rather formed by centering on the self that exists in the unconscious, it is doubtful whether or not the consciousness has a center.¹⁹

But it is not particularly necessary to assume such a thing as "the structure of the Japanese ego." The duality of the ego that Kawai points out can be explained in terms of the duality of *on* and *kun* readings. In fact, even Lacan, who is ignorant of the history of Japan or East Asia, can see it. Lacan writes the following:

In other terms the [Japanese] subject is divided as everywhere by language (*langage*), but one of its registers can be satisfied by reference to writing [Chinese characters] and the other by speech. This is without doubt what has given Roland Barthes the giddy feeling (*sentiment enivré*) that of all its manners the Japanese subject does not cover anything. *The Empire of Signs*, he titles his essay, meaning: empire of *semblants*.²⁰

That is, there is no repression in Japan. Yet, it does not mean at all that Japanese society is free. Although Lacan does not comment on a society without repression, we must think not of the Oedipal power produced by *repression* but of the power produced by *foreclosure*.

Although power has always been represented by the monarchic or patriarchic model of the sole concentrating power, Foucault insists that such a model is merely a “representation of power,”²¹ but in fact not the reality of power: “power come from below [T]he manifold relationships of force that takes shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole.”²² Foucault also criticizes the psychoanalysis that dominated the French intellectual scene after the sixties. Psychoanalysis tells that the self is not the subject in the unconscious but subjected. According to Foucault, however, it is precisely psychoanalysis that succeeded the pastoral power’s technology of confession and produced the subject and sexuality. In order to be a subject, subjection is necessary, and at the same time in order to be a subject, one must be freed from the subjection. Consequently, a liberation movement from a subjection results in another subjection. In other words, a liberation movement from a repression results in another repression. Foucault holds that in order to be freed from repression, one must be freed from the idea of repression first.

Yet, this theory of power has no effect on “the structure of the Emperor system.” In the power structure that Maruyama called the “structure of the Emperor system” there is no subject that could be the center. The center of power is nothing. In this structure, moreover, the “manifold relationships of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions” is not hidden but exposed without causing confusion. This structure is also evident in the most regulated mobilization in the war. For instance, Konoe Fumimaro established the “Imperial Rule Assistance Order” with the support of all classes and parties in 1940, but he could not gain despotic power. In Japanese fascism there is no subject that could assume responsibility. In the trials after the war, all war criminals asserted that they had acted at the commands of their superiors. If so, it follows that ultimately everyone acted at the emperor’s command, but according to the constitution the emperor himself, the highest executive, could not intervene in politics. The emperor was deified but also considered a constitutional monarch, so that he was actually acquitted of his war responsibility at the Tokyo Tribunal after the war. Japanese fascism, unlike its German or Italian counterparts, retained the modern constitution and parliamentary politics. There was no positive program, but it seems as if “what would happen” happened.

I have mentioned Maruyama's comment on the intellectual history of Japan: in Japanese intellectual history, there is no principle that could serve as a coordinate axis to locate each individual idea, and no development or accumulation because of the lack of confrontation with underlying principles. In that case, Maruyama thought, it is only Marxism that could provide the coordinate axis in the intellectual history of Japan. Only Marxism formed the subject by its unmatched force. If so, of course, it would be banished, as Akutagawa's "spirit" of Japan predicts. Unlike previous foreign thoughts and religions, however, Marxism left indelible traces in those who were converted away from it.²³ The thought and literature of post-war Japan was regulated by these traces. It is after the 1970s that Japanese intellectuals were freed from such a "coordinate axis." Yet, in Japan, the liberation from repression exposes the power caused by foreclosure.

Foucault criticized Marxism-Leninism as a pastoral power, but this criticism signifies differently in France than in Japan, which has no "coordinate axis" except Marxism. In France there is "power-knowledge," and it cannot be easily dismantled. It will survive through all the possible forms of critique. It is in this sense that it should be criticized in any form possible. In the absence of such a coordinate axis, however, the situation will assume a different aspect. In Japan, Foucauldian critique of "power-knowledge" has actually functioned to deny the role of the intellectuals and leftist movements, which have always been helpless. This is also the case in America.

In the 1950s America, the oppression by McCarthyism and massification annulled the "power-knowledge." The phenomena of mass and consumer society that became explicit at that time must have appeared to Europeans as foolish, but what happened then was inseminated with almost everything that surfaced later in postmodernism. Therefore, the works by the North American sociologists and critics who were engaged in the problem are prescient. For example, Boorstin pointed out that the event was replaced by the pseudo-event, by what Baudrillard later called a simulacrum. Furthermore, McLuhan foresightedly argued that the new media of television would bring about an epochal change.

Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* focuses on the fact that these changes emerge as a problem of the *subject*. Classifying society into types of tradition-directed, inner-directed, and other-directed, he points out that US society has been transformed from the inner-directed type to the other-directed one. The inner-directed type has an autonomous "self" and cannot be easily influenced by tradition or others. These types are represented by the independent and self-sufficient farmers of the Midwest; they are the typical Americans, in a sense. Yet, according to Riesman, they have become other-directed rapidly. Unlike the tradition-directed, the other-directed type does not have an objective norm. As Hegel observed, to be directed by

the other is the desire of the other, that is, the desire to be affirmed by the other. In this desire, the “other” that directs this type of people is a product of imagination as results from their mutual concern. The masses have thus emerged in the pseudo-event or new media: they might appear subjective and free from traditional norms, but in fact they are drifting with no subjectivity.

This phenomenon is not unique to America. It can happen anywhere when a transition of industrial capitalism takes place from primary and secondary industries to tertiary industry, in other words, from manufacture of goods to production of information. It happened in America earlier than in any other country not only because there the tradition-directed type did not exist from the beginning, but also because the inner-directed type was actually sparse. The farmers of the Midwest, whom Riesman considers typical Americans, originally consisted of immigrants who refused tradition-directed society, but the community formed by them could be extremely other-directed precisely because it lacked traditional norms. It is needless to say that they are both democratic and anti-intellectual. What is exposed in mass society is precisely these inclinations.

It is in this America that Alexandre Kojève tried to seek out the human being after the “end of history.” Based on Hegelian philosophy, Francis Fukuyama interprets America’s political triumph of 1989 as the “end of history,” but this interpretation is in fact based on Kojève’s reading of Hegel. Unlike Fukuyama, Kojève himself saw the “end of history” in future communism. For Kojève, however, communism is not only something to be realized in the future but also something already visible in the present. He names the “American way of life” as an example of communism; it is a society in which there is no longer struggle or class, an animalistic society without speculative necessity for any “understanding of the world and of self.” What he calls the “American way of life” is not tradition-directed or inner-directed but an other-directed world. That is, Kojève regards as animalistic the way of life that completely lacks subjectivity while retaining its semblance, and expects that the world would be *Americanized* in the future. Yet, his trip to Japan in 1959 led him to a “radical change of opinion.”

There I was able to observe a Society that is one of a kind, because it alone has for almost three centuries experienced life at the “end of History”—that is, in the absence of all civil or external war (following the liquidation of feudalism by the roturier Hideyoshi and the artificial isolation of the century conceived and realized by his noble successor Yiyeasu [sic]). Now, the existence of the Japanese nobles, who ceased to risk their lives (even in duel) and yet did not for that begin to work, was anything but animal.

“Post-historical” Japanese civilization undertook ways diametrically opposed to the “American way.” No doubt, there were no longer in Japan any Religion, Morals, or Politics in the “European” or “historical” sense of these words. But Snobbery in its pure form created disciplines negating the “natural” or “animal” given which in effectiveness far surpassed those that arose, in Japan or elsewhere, from “historical” Action—that is, from warlike and revolutionary Fights or from forced Work. To be sure, the peaks (equaled nowhere else) of specifically Japanese snobbery—the Noh Theater, the ceremony of tea, and the art of bouquets of flowers—were and still remain the exclusive prerogative of the nobles and the rich. But in spite of persistent economic and political inequalities, all Japanese without exception are currently in a position to live according to totally *formalized* values—that is, values completely empty of all “human” content in the “historical” sense. Thus, in the extreme, every Japanese is in principle capable of committing, from pure snobbery, a perfectly “gratuitous” *suicide* (the classical épée of the samurai can be replaced by an airplane or a torpedo), which has nothing to do with the *risk* of life in a Fight waged for the sake of “historical” values that have social or political content.²⁴

Kojève concludes that “the recently begun interaction between Japan and the Western world will finally lead not to a rebarbarization of the Japanese but to a “Japanization” of the Westerners (including the Russians).”²⁵ Seen as a theory of Japanese culture, of course, this observation would be nothing but a superficial stereotype. However, what Kojève refers to under the names of “America” and “Japan” is not an actual existence but a form resulting from philosophical reflection. In this sense, the Japanese snobbism means a way of life in which one risks one’s life on a game of an empty form without historical ideals or intellectual, moral contents. It is not tradition-directed or inner-directed mode but an extreme mode of other-directed society, in which there is no internality or the other.

Kojève turns his focus from the mass society of America to the Edo period of Japan. At first sight, he might seem to disregard modern Japan, but his perspective was prescient. For, what twenty years later manifested itself in Japan’s bubble economy was a repetition of the snobbism that had been sophisticated in its scorn for intelligence and morality during the three hundred years of the peaceful Edo period. Since the Meiji period, the modern literature and thought of Japan had attempted to refuse this snobbism and to establish an autonomous “subject.” On the contrary, however, what had become evident in the 1980s was the scorn toward the “subject” or “meaning” and the indulgence in formal plays of language. Replacing the modern novel, Manga, Anime, video games, and design—or the literature and art linked to them—became dominant;

their dominance means that mass culture, which began in America, has become emptier but also more sophisticated in terms of aesthetics. Japan's bubble economy soon collapsed, but it is precisely after the collapse that this mass culture began prevailing globally. In this sense, the world seems to begin being "Japanized."

This Japanization indicates the simple fact that the global capitalist economy is eradicating the previous tradition-directed and inner-directed societies and bringing about other-directed societies on a global scale, in which the centripetal power or the intellectual power based on repression is impotent. Impotence of power, however, does not mean its disappearance. It rather means that the power produced by foreclosure is being globalized. It is not easy to counter this globalized power because it is difficult to be conscious of the fact that there is such a power. Yet, I believe that the example of Japan can provide us with a clue to the fact of the power. My idea is therefore precisely the opposite of thinking the "end of history" by using Japan as a clue.

AFTERWORD TO THE JAPANESE EDITION

The essays collected in this volume, which are mainly concerned with nationalism, were written while I was working on a series of essays for a magazine under the title of “Investigations III” during the 1990s. In 1998, however, I conceived an epoch-making idea. “Investigations III” was therefore cancelled and rewritten entirely under the new project, which resulted in *Transcritique*. This shift cannot help affecting those essays on nationalism. In *Transcritique*, I try to comprehend the modern capital-nation-state as a juncture in which different exchange modes are tied like the Borromean knot, and my essays on nationalism were revised entirely in conformity to this new comprehension. In this sense, even though it was originally written before *Transcritique*, this volume is indeed its sequel. I believe that in this volume I have made some progress in my reflection on the nation and the state, which remained preparatory in *Transcritique*.

Kojin Karatani
New York, March 2004

NOTES

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1. For much of modernity, the dominant flow of information, technology, and capital, has been cast from the metropolises in Europe and North America outward to peripheries that were seen in supporting and derivative roles. While resources, data, and information could be harvested from around the world, finished industrial products, theory, and philosophy had been a single direction flow from the metropole. While it has been a powerful Hegelian argument against this dominant paradigm that peripheries order centers and therefore the structuralist view which posits center and periphery in the first place is always unstable, in practice there have been few Asian, South American, and African artists, let alone cultural theorists to garner success at reversing the trend. Karatani has managed what Natsume Sōseki, Kobayashi Hideo, Kuki Shūzō, and Tezuka Tomio among others had only accomplished posthumously—making their names as relevant to ongoing discussions by global intelligentsia as they had been for discussions within Japanese discourse.

See also Reinhard May, *Heidegger's Hidden Sources: East Asian Influences On His Work*, trans. Graham Parkes (New York: Routledge, 1996) and Reinhard May and Tomio Tezuka, *Ex oriente lux: Heideggers Werk unter ostasiatischem Einfluss* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1989).

2. Japanese Wikipedia at ja.wikipedia.org, accessed on October 4, 2012.

3. Karatani Kōjin, *Naisei to Sokō*, Kōdansha Gakujutsu Bunko (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1988), 287.

4. Karatani Kōjin, "Preface to the English Edition," *Architecture as Metaphor: Language, Number, Money*, trans. Sabu Kohso, ed. Michael Speaks (Cambridge, MA.: MIT Press, 1995), xxxvii.

5. The genre in which much of Karatani's writing over the years has been categorized lies not in academic genres of literary criticism and philosophy per se, but rather

in the far more open genre of *bungei hyōron* (literary review) or even broader genre of simply *hyōron* (which is often glossed in English as simply “criticism”, but which might be best translated as work of the public intellectual). The forms of *hyōron* are multiple as are the paths of the *hyōronka* (critic); so speaking of these quixotic and mercurial texts and their authors through the metaphor of turns, breaks, contradictions, and tangents itself denies the fluidity of the genre, which requires neither linear progression nor smooth logic. With *hyōron*, we should expect turns to be the case, since writers must change to keep up with changes in public attitudes, to maintain relevance, and to continue their publication of their writings. And perhaps therefore such turns are not turns at all but adherences to the generic conventions of “turns.”

Fittingly his career has been the cause of some definitional confusion both within and beyond Japan; and Karatani himself has discussed his own struggle to categorize his work explaining the difference between *hihyō* (criticism/critical theory) and *hihan* (critique) in the English-speaking world as “area studies,” “theory,” or “philosophy.” Outside of Japan his career appears uneven and divided, in part because only four book-length translations have yet to appear. And generic interpretations take Karatani’s own assertions about the presence of a turn in his work at face value, neglecting to look for underlying singularities of Karatani’s thought.

However, Karatani has struggled to maintain a distance from the genre into which he has been often cast. He has resisted the label *hyōron-ka* (critic) and at times opted for the more critical genre of *hihyō* (critique) to categorize his work. If the nature of the genre of *hyōron* (criticism) is to change with the times, to provide provocative opinion from within the publishing industry, the nature of *hihyō* (critique) is more akin to the Kantian notion of critique that is neither dogmatic nor opportunistic, but rather rational, well reasoned, and significant in its consistent offering of outsider and radical perspectives. Although Karatani argues persuasively the point that for critique to maintain its significance, it must move beyond its starting point, this is no flimsy, floating positionality, but rather the fulfillment of a continual ethical need to find oppositionality. Rather than maintaining adherence to the generic confines of discipline or genre, of public or academic inquiry, this view of the Kantian transcendental critique can be seen as the guiding principle of Karatani’s thought even prior to his direct engagement with and reading of Kant.

6. Karatani Kōjin, Zaitō Osamu, Hasumi Shigehiko, Maeda Hideki, and Asada Akira, “Kyōdōtōgi: Durūzu to tetsugaku,” *Hihyō kūkan* 2, no. 9 (April 1996): 22–54.

7. Sekii Mitsuo and Karatani Kōjin, “Hihan tetsugaku e no tenkai—‘nihon kindai bungaku no kigen,’” *Kokubungaku* tokushū Karatani Kōjin no tetsugaku: Toransukuriteiku 49, no. 1 (January 2004): 15.

8. *Ibid.*, 16.

9. *Ibid.*, 16.

10. Sekii and Karatani, “Hihan tetsugaku e no tenkai,” 15. In addition to the dates of 1996 and 1986 given above, there is also no small significance of 1983 as noted by Azuma

Hiroki in his epilogue to Karatani's *Hyūmoa toshite no yuibutsuron* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1999), 346–47.

11. Fukuda Kazuya, “Karatani Kōjin-shi to Nihon no hihyō,” *Shinchō* 90 (November 1993): 219.

12. By no means exhaustive, the following is a brief list displaying the range of work which we can say was produced in the field of Japanese literary studies in the wake of Karatani. Tomi Suzuki, *Narrating the Self: Fictions of Japanese Modernity* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996). Jeffrey Angles, *Writing the Love of Boys: Origins of Bishōnen Culture in Modernist Japanese Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011). Atsuko Ueda, *Concealment of Politics, Politics of Concealment: The Production of Literature in Meiji Japan* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007). Saijō Tsutomu, “Kakareta sekai no yurai nit suite: kojiki ni okeru ‘koten bungaku no kigen,’” *Kokugo to kokubungaku* (November 1994): 21–32.

13. This of course is not entirely removed from Kamei Hideo's critique of Karatani on more scholarly grounds. See Michael Bourdaghs, “Introduction,” *Transformations of Sensibility: The Phenomenology of Meiji Literature* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Japanese Studies, The University of Michigan, 2002), xi–xv.

14. Karatani Kōjin, *Architecture as Metaphor: Language, Number, Money*, trans. Sabu Kohso, ed. Michael Speaks (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), xvi.

15. Sekii and Karatani, “Hihan tetsugaku e no tenkai,” 17.

16. For more on Karatani's views on deconstruction see Azuma Hiroki's “Hiroki Azuma,” in his epilogue to Karatani's collection of essays “*Materialism*” as Humour (Hyūmoa toshite no yuibutsuron); he writes that humor in Karatani's essay and book is “nothing more than another name for that hope,” for a cure to the sicknesses of modernity that Karatani spent the early part of his career defining. The importance of Karatani's claim that Marx is humorous, then, should not be underestimated. This would be the 3D image, the one that puts the two images into one clearer rendering. We can see this tying together of antinomies even before its Kantian parallax definition in *Transcritique*. Azuma also writes:

“Kojin Karatani tries to generalize the question of (de Manian) deconstruction and to locate it in his broader critique of the architectonic metaphors used by “Western Metaphysics,” referring to Kurt Gödel's incompleteness theorem. Deconstructive reading is done by discovering in a text a point where its object-level (grammatical) meaning and meta-level (rhetorical) meaning would inevitably commingle with each other, which should be considered a literal equivalent to the mathematical ruses Gödel used in proving his theorem.” Azuma Hiroki “Two Deconstructions: Toward the Theoretical Understanding of Derrida's Postal Metaphors,” <http://www.hirokiazuma.com/en/texts/deconstructions.html>, accessed July 4, 2008.

17. Kojin Karatani, *Transcritique*, trans. Sabu Kohso (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 2001), 50.

18. Karatani, *Transcritique*, 98.
19. Kōjin Karatani, “Nakano Shigeharu to tenkō,” *Chūō kōron bungei tokushū* 5, no. 4 (1988 12): 108–130.
20. Karatani, *Architecture as Metaphor*, 115.
21. Karatani, *Transcritique*, viii–xii.
22. Immanuel Kant, “Perpetual Peace,” in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), 107.
23. Kojin Karatani “Nēshon to Bigaku,” *Nation and Aesthetics: On Kant and Freud*, trans. Jonathan E. Abel, Darwin H. Tsen, and Hiroki Yoshikuni (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), see Chapter 2 on page 58 of this book.
24. Karatani, *Transcritique*, 281.
25. Kojin Karatani, *The Structure of World History: From Modes of Production to Modes of Exchange*, trans. Michael K. Bourdaghs (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), xv–xvi.
26. Karatani, *Transcritique*, 281.
27. *Ibid.*, 18.
28. *Ibid.*, xiii.
29. Marcel Mauss, *The Gift* (London: Routledge, 1954), 16–17.
30. Since *The Structure of World History*, Karatani has used exchange modes “A,” “B,” and “C” to designate reciprocity (primitive society), plundering-redistribution (the state), and commodity exchange (market) respectively, and the X has been called the exchange mode “D.”
31. Immanuel Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent,” in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, 31–32.
32. Immanuel Kant, “First Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*,” in *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 32–33.
33. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 157.
34. Kojin Karatani, *Kotoba to Higeiki* [Language and Tragedy], (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1993), 328–330.
35. Paul de Man, *Aesthetic Ideology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 79.
36. *Ibid.*, 89.
37. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, translated and cited by de Man in *Aesthetic Ideology*, 80.
38. de Man, *Aesthetic Ideology*, 80–81.
39. *Ibid.*, 127.
40. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 145.
41. de Man, *Aesthetic Ideology*, 85.
42. *Ibid.*, 82.
43. *Ibid.*, 127.

44. Ibid., 87.

45. Mauss, *The Gift*, 93.

46. Ibid., 81.

47. Karatani, *Nation and Aesthetics*, see Chapter 1 on page 4 of this book.

48. Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem of Masochism," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. and trans. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth, 1953–1974), 19: 170 [translation modified].

Chapter 1

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), 144.

2. In *The Grundrisse* (trans. Martin Nicolaus [New York: Vintage, 1973]), Marx discusses and classifies the "forms which precede capitalist production" as the following: primitive clan society, oriental despotic state (Asiatic mode of production), classical slavery society, and western feudal system (471–479). Yet, unlike Hegel's world history, this classification should not be regarded as stages of historical development. Assuming that this variety of modes results from differences in the mode of production between the conquering people and the conquered, Takeuchi Yoshirō divides them into three modes in his *The State and Civilization* [Kokka to bunmei] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1975). These are: A. General subjection: this mode keeps the conquered clan society intact and converts the community's ownership of the land into the state's. If there is difference in a profession, it is immobilized as a caste and ruled by the king as a unifier over all the clans and tribes. B. Classical slave society (Greece and Rome): being isolated from the clan society, the conquered individuals are enslaved. C. A kind of serfdom, feudalism, ur-feudalism, or tributary system (Western Europe and Japan): the conquering people rule militarily while leaving domestic governance to the conquered, agricultural people, plundering their products regularly and in return protecting them from foreign enemies.

Mode A is often called Asiatic, but Takeuchi argues that from the viewpoint of world history this mode is universal and should not be given such a regional name. The classification above does not signify an order of historical development. In reality, combined with each other, there are more varieties of mode. Accordingly, Maxime Rodinson suggests that these modes should generally be called "pre-capitalist systems of exploitation" (*Islam and Capitalism*, trans. Brian Pearce [New York: Pantheon, 1973]). Yet it should be noted that they can also be formed under a capitalist world market. Mode B, the slave society, for example, was established in the American South and the Caribbean Sea. Moreover the Spanish rule of Mexico clearly belongs to mode A. That is to say, the Spanish kingdom did not destroy the Mexican community but tried to protect it actively; or it can be said that Spanish protection even reconstituted the community of the indigenous people. (See Enrique Semo, *The History of Capitalism in Mexico: The Origins 1521–1763*, trans. Lidia Lozano [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993].) In this sense, these modes can be seen as those of the plundering-redistribution exchange.

3. The feudal relationship of master and servant is at bottom reciprocal and mutual. It is not merely one of economical reciprocity where rewards are disbursed in accordance with merit. Psychologically its meaning is also double; for example, Maruyama Masao calls it “loyalty and resistance,” according to which if the master is not worth his status, the servant can rebel against him (See Maruyama, *Chūsei to hangyaku* [Loyalty and Resistance], Tokyo: Chikuma, 1998).

4. Anarchists believed that agrarian communities would form a self-governing world without the state and capital once the state power that repressed them was removed. As seen in nineteenth-century Russia and other regions, therefore, the anarchists, who hated the state power, affirmed terrorism through assassination. Their terrorism was considered acceptable only because they did not intend to usurp power by means of terrorism. Yet it is merely a fantasy to assume that an agrarian community as such could form a self-governing group; rather, such communities worship emperors.

5. Karl Marx, “The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte,” in *Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 616.

6. In my investigation of the types of exchange, I have found that we must distinguish them from the historical origins of exchange. Nevertheless such investigation can be helpful for probing the historical origins. For example, it is generally assumed that class exploitation or the state emerged when the production capacity was developed to the point of being able to yield surplus products. This assumption is unacceptable. On the contrary, it is precisely when the state was established that the production capacity was enhanced dramatically, an enhancement made possible by the state’s enforcement and concentration of labor. In the reciprocal economy, on the other hand, people would not work more than necessity requires; accordingly, class difference is smaller and the working hour shorter while people are materially poor on the whole. This still holds true today, more or less.

7. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I, trans. Ben Fowkes (New York: Penguin, 1990), 247.

8. Absolute monarchy existed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. I believe, however, that we need not consider this structure limited strictly to historical facts. In the Meiji Restoration of 1868, for example, the emperor system was contrived to form a nation out of feudal hierarchy and clan divisions. There is a problem in calling this system absolute monarchy, but it is not an important problem. What is important is the fact that, in order to form a modern nation, an absolute dictator is necessary, a dictator who can forcibly dissolve the feudal caste and tribal conflicts. Such *dictators* as Mao Zedong in China and Park Chunghee in South Korea—as a result—played this role. It is not important whether they were monarchs or not.

9. Religious movements are usually distinguished from social movements, but there has never been a social movement that is not a religious movement. Up to a certain historical phase, association movements always appeared in the form of the religious movement. There are numerous examples: various forms of millennial movements, the German Peasants’ Revolt, Jōdo Shin sect’s revolts in Japan, Maitreya worship, and the Taiping Rebellion in China. When socialist movements and nationalist movements

reach a deadlock, they again assume the forms of the religious movement. There is a structural foundation for the link between religious and social movements.

10. The Paris Commune is mainly based on the Proudhonian theory: the association of producers' cooperatives. Its strength diminished through political oppression, but it is not the only reason for the decline of cooperatives. In England, it is only until the stage of light industry that producers' cooperatives could counter capitalist production; when heavy industry was developed and capital magnified between the 1860s and 1870s, the cooperatives could not avoid decline. Engels scorned Proudhonian association while valuing mega-corporations highly as "socialization of production," because he assumed that socialism could be realized by nationalizing them through the parliamentary system.

11. For example, there used to be a theory that Japan's Meiji Restoration was not a bourgeois revolution because its leaders were lower-class samurais and intellectuals. Insofar as it resulted in a modern state and capitalist economy, however, the Meiji Restoration was a bourgeois revolution, even though the merchant class, who depended on the feudal system, did not want such a radical change. This is not peculiar to Japan. Generally speaking, it is clear from the examples of England and France that agents of bourgeois revolutions are not the bourgeois or capitalist class. In that sense, the *socialist revolutions* of the twentieth century, which aimed at independence and unification of the people, are bourgeois revolutions. These revolutions were led by no one but socialists, for the capitalist and landlord class did not want any revolution. In addition, violence is intrinsic to the bourgeois revolution because it seeks to establish a modern state, which monopolizes otherwise dispersed violence.

12. Gondō Seikyō's idea of *shashoku*—an agrarian community of self-government and reciprocal aid—was at bottom an attempt to reject the state and capitalism. It was close to anarchism. In fact, as in China and Russia, the idea of anarchism was based on such communities—or rather imagined communities. Gondō was different from anarchists, however, in that he deployed the emperor to symbolize the *shashoku*. Of course, Gondō's emperor refers to neither the emperor system after the Meiji era nor the ancient emperors of the Yamato dynasty. His is an emperor from before Japan was formed as a state, an emperor who was merely a priest of a clan community. Gondō makes a contrast with Kita Ikki, who tried to use the emperor as the sovereignty of a modern state. Yet, although Gondō's emperor was proposed as the symbol of a nation, it resulted in the reinforcement of the state. Interestingly, representative anarchists such as Iwasa Sakutarō or Ishikawa Sanshirō were influenced by Gondō and insisted on "anarchism under the emperor." Moreover, believing their own adherence to anarchism, they did not admit their mistake even after the Second World War. This instance typically indicates how different the nation is from the state. That is, the nation is on the one hand determined by the state, but on the other hand it has aspects of anti-state association. In 1933, in addition, Sano Manabu, a communist leader, declared his conversion in jail, proposing "socialism under the emperor system." His declaration led to a mass conversion not because the state and capital won, but because he called for a start

of a national movement of communism independent of the Soviet Union—for the time being. [Translator's note. For more in English on the concept of *shashoku* see Thomas R. H. Havens, *Farm and Nation in Modern Japan: Agrarian Nationalism, 1870–1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 194–231.]

13. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 11.

14. *Ibid.*, 11–12.

15. Motoori Norinaga (1730–1801) conceived similar ideas to those of German romanticism at the same period. He argued that the sentiment of “*mono no aware*” had truth over intellectual concepts and morality, and moreover that what he called “*mono no aware*” was “sympathy” and claimed other’s “sympathy.” Motoori aestheticized knowledge and morality. Since the source of more authentic knowledge and morality had been located in China, Motoori’s aestheticization could be seen as an anti-Chinese resistance. In opposition to the Chinese characters and continental culture written by them, he sanctified ancient Japanese that had been written in the *kana* syllabary. This move is not different from Fichte’s, who sanctified German as the pure “original language” in opposition to Latin and foreign cultures derived from it. As I shall argue in another chapter (“Nation-State and Linguistics”), Motoori thought within the framework of the “Modern World-System” in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

16. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996), 74.

17. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 215.

18. Kant divides reason between its speculative and practical uses, calling the former understanding and the latter reason. In other words, understanding is concerned with speculative cognition, reason with morality. Furthermore, imagination mediates sensibility and understanding, distinguished from judgment that mediates understanding and reason. In order to make the argument simple, however, I call them sensibility, reason, and imagination respectively. The point is that these three form the structure of a Borromean knot.

19. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, 67.

20. [Translator’s note. See Herman Cohen’s introduction to F. A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus und Kritik seiner Bedeutung in der Gegenwart*, vol. 2 (Leipzig, J Baedeker, 1902), 524. Also William Kluback, *The Idea of Humanity: Hermann Cohen’s Legacy to Philosophy and Theology* (University Press of America, 1987), 26.]

21. [Translator’s note. Karatani puns on the same pronunciation of 想像 (imagination) and 創造 (creation). Both are pronounced *sōzō* in Japanese.]

22. The aesthetics of the Romantic philosophers began with Kant’s implication about the possibility that sensibility and understanding are fundamentally linked by the imagination. Heidegger found ontological thinking in Kant’s description of imagination in the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*, which was deleted in the second: Heidegger returned to the Romantic perspective. Tanabe Hajime, a

Kyoto-school philosopher, also attempted in *Logic of Species* [Shu no ronri] to locate the people—as the particular—between the human (universal) and the individual (singular). Miki Kiyoshi's *Logic of Imagination* [Kōsō-ryoku no ronri] also brought into focus the mediating and creative function of the imagination. In fact, their projects were to find a meaning in their conversions from Kantianism or Marxism into *nationalism*. As Tosaka Jun commented on Nishida Kitarō, the Kyoto school was aesthetic from the beginning, and never severed the aesthetic unity—the imaginary link.

23. Johann Gottfried von Herder, "Treatise on the Origin of Language," in *Philosophical Writings*, trans. Michael N. Forster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 85–87.

24. According to Ian Hacking, while Kant remained in the philosophy of subjectivity, it was Johann Georg Hamann, a critic of Kant, and Herder under Hamann's influence who first conceived of language as public. Hegel made it clearer; Hacking suggests, "[Hegel] argued that 'language is self-consciousness existing for *others*,' and that it is 'an outer reality.' Thus, when language was recognized as external, public, and social, we experienced simultaneously a radical conversion regarding the ego or identity" (Preface to the Japanese edition of *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?* [Gengo wa naze tetsugaku no mondai ni narunoka], trans. Kunitake Itō [Tokyo: Keisō Shobō, 1989]). Yet these philosophers' attention to language does not necessarily signify philosophy's "linguistic turn." The Romantic philosophers deemed language merely as externalization of the spirit, which lacks such impenetrable materiality or otherness that revolts against the conscious subject. On the other hand, Kant points out the antinomy of the art work: it is a concept and at the same time not a concept. In terms of linguistic art, this antinomy means that the text might have meanings independent of the author's intention: language has impenetrable materiality that cannot be reduced to consciousness. In Hegel's *Aesthetics*, artwork is merely a realization of the spirit, or concept (See *Hegel's Aesthetics*, vol. I, trans. T. M. Knox [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975]). That is to say, Hegel sees language only as sensibilization or aestheticization of the spirit.

25. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses To The German Nation*, trans. Gregory Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 166–167.

26. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1973), 125.

27. Robert Mantran's comment in Fernand Braudel, *Une leçon d'histoire de Fernand Braudel* (Paris: Arthaud: Flammarion, 1986), 26–27.

28. Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 127–128.

29. The issue of the non-Western *empires* and *nation-states* is not addressed here; it will be discussed in Chapter 5 ("Nation-State and Linguistics"). In relation to the problem of Luther's Reformation and his translation of the Bible, I only cite an example of the relationship between religion and written expression in Japan. Japan is situated at the periphery of the east Asian *empire*—the cultural sphere of Chinese characters—in a broad sense. Between the seventh and eighth centuries, the Japanese started using

written expressions, which were formed not by writing Japanese speech in Chinese characters but by reading those characters in Japanese pronunciations—*kun*. Therefore Chinese characters and the Japanese phonetic syllabary (*kana*) are basically mixed in Japanese writing. In the age of Nara and Heian Buddhism, however, common people could not read the Buddhist scriptures because they were written in Chinese. In this respect, it is worth noting that plain writing using a mixture of Chinese characters and the Japanese syllabary was employed by Kamakura Buddhism—or a *reformation* of Japanese Buddhism—in the thirteenth century. For example, plain style was used in numerous correspondences addressed to laymen, *Lamenting the Deviations* [Tannisho] (edited by Shinran's disciple, Yuien), and *Record of Things Heard from the Treasury of the True Dharma Eye* [Shōbōgenzō zuimonki] (documented by Dōgen's disciple, Ejō). It is possible to maintain both the notion that the plain writing was already prevalent and the idea that the Kamakura Buddhists popularized such writing (along with reading). Kamakura Buddhism intended to recover the authentic elements of the universal religion, which were lost in the Buddhism of the *empire*, but at the same time this recovery gave expression to the Japanese people or nation. D. T. Suzuki called this a “Japanese spirituality.” This is one of the reasons that Mahayanist Buddhism, which perished in China and Korea after a short period in vogue, survived in Japan.

30. Fichte, *Addresses To The German Nation*, 57–58.

31. *Ibid.*, 85.

32. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 200), 180, *italics original*.

33. *Ibid.*, 190, *italics original*.

34. In the German Third Reich, as well as in Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, overcoming of the modern nation-state, capitalism, and communism was professed. In Japan, it was declared by the slogan “overcoming of modernity.” For example, Nishida Kitarō understood the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as a world of Leibnizian monadology, in which, unlike the Hegelian states of the Soviet Union and the Nazis, each ethnicity maintains its independence and also expresses itself as a whole. In that case, the emperor was given a meaning of a “place” that would include all the monads (ethnicities), a place not as a “being” above but as “nothingness.” Of course, in reality Nishida's monad did not exist, but his understanding of the Co-Prosperity Sphere was an attempt to overcome the contradictions and conflicts of his time.

35. See Marx, *Capital*, trans. David Fernbach (New York: Penguin, 1991), vol. I, 247ff., vol. III, chapter 14, section 5.

36. Negri and Hardt's idea of multitude is inspired by Deleuze and Guattari. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, the latter propose the concept of “smooth space,” which stands for a nomadic space rejecting boundaries and rules while indicating random movements. This is not different from the X space that I call association. Association is of the order of free association. Yet it is too simplistic to approach the problem of capitalism and the nation-state only in terms of the binary opposition between smooth and “striated” spaces (See Deleuze and Guattari, “1227: Treatise on Nomadology,” in

A Thousand Plateaus, trans. Brian Massumi [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press], 351–423).

37. Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's "Philosophy of Right,"* trans. Annette Jolin and Joseph O'Malley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 131.

38. *Ibid.*, 131.

39. *Ibid.*, 136 [Translation modified].

Chapter 2

1. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 99.

2. Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent," in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), 31–32.

3. Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973), 272.

4. *Ibid.*, 273–274.

5. Sigmund Freud, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (hereafter *S. E.*), ed. and trans. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth, 1953–1974), 8: 236.

6. Sigmund Freud, "Humour." *S. E.*, 21: 161.

7. *Ibid.*, 163–166.

8. *Ibid.*, 166.

9. Sigmund Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death." *S. E.*, 14: 275.

10. *Ibid.*, 282.

11. *Ibid.*, 299.

12. *Ibid.*, 287–288.

13. *Ibid.*, 287.

14. *Ibid.*, 287.

15. *Ibid.*, 296, 299–300.

16. Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, *S. E.*, 18: 52–53.

17. *Ibid.*, 32.

18. Freud, "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," 275.

19. *Ibid.*, 292.

20. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, *S. E.*, 21: 141.

21. Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 47.

22. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958), 136.

23. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 17.

24. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 142; original emphasis.

25. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 130.
26. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 59.
27. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 78.
28. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, S. E., 21: 49.
29. Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem in Masochism," S. E., 19: 169.
30. Ibid., 167.
31. Freud, "Humour," 166.
32. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, 53.
33. Kant, "Universal History," 34–35.
34. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. T. M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press), 213–214.
35. Immanuel Kant, "To Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," in *Perpetual Peace*, 117–118.
36. Kant, "Universal History," 36 (fonts reversed), 38 (fonts reversed).
37. It was in 1795, shortly before Napoleon's rise in the process of the French Revolution, that Kant wrote *To Perpetual Peace*. He seemed to anticipate the war between the nation-states, which emerged with the French Revolution. In that sense *To Perpetual Peace* is a critique of the French Revolution.
38. Kant, "Universal History," 37–38.
39. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The German Ideology* (New York: International, 1970), 56.
40. Hegel, in his *Philosophy of Right*, stressed that a state's sovereignty was directed toward the outside, that is, toward other states. This point is neglected by Marx in his critique of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Reflecting on the state only in its relation to civil society (or the welfare state), that is, only within the boundary of one state, he neglected the fact that a state exists insofar as it is related to other states. Accordingly, Marxists in general tend to emphasize struggles against a state and capital within the state and to scorn Kant's attempts to limit the sovereignty between states. Still, even if it is possible within a state to abolish the political state and establish a welfare state or a commune, as was the case with the Paris Commune, it cannot avoid collapse due to the intervention of other states. Otherwise that state would have to become powerful itself. The movement to abolish a state engenders one with more power. Marx did not consider this paradox because, for him, a revolution limited to one state was impossible. He always presupposed the simultaneous world revolution. It is an unrealistic presupposition, however. In the Russian Revolution, for example, presupposing the start of revolutions in Europe, Lenin and Trotsky pressed for the seizure of power, but the revolutions never broke out. Hence what Stalin called "socialism in one state" was born. In the event, this form of socialism abandoned Lenin's anarchistic ideal of the "withering away of the states." This problem is still relevant. When the simultaneous "world revolution" is impossible, how is it possible to supercede the states? Not only a revolution within each state but also the process in which, in the relationship between

the states, their sovereignty is gradually limited is essential. This is what Kant's theory of perpetual peace suggests.

41. Immanuel Kant, "On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory, But Is of No Practical Use," in *Perpetual Peace*, 86–87.

42. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 262–263.

43. In a lecture shortly after the war, Karl Jaspers, criticizing the political nature of the Nürnberg trials by the victor nations, aimed at recovery of the pride of the German race by voluntarily accepting the guilt of Nazism. He divides the responsibilities of war into four kinds: criminal, political, moral, and metaphysical. Basically it can be said that the policies of postwar Germany are based upon the philosophical arrangement of Jaspers. Yet, is it possible to distinguish between moral and metaphysical responsibilities? "Metaphysical guilt is the lack of absolute solidarity with the human being such as—an indelible claim beyond morally meaningful duty. This solidarity is violated by my presence at a wrong or a crime. It is not enough that I cautiously risk my life to prevent it; if it happens, and if I was there, and if I survive where the other is killed, I know from a voice within myself: I am guilty of being still alive" (*The Question of German Guilt*, trans. E. B. Ashton [New York: Capricorn, 1961], 71). What Freud refers to as "conscience," namely the superego, is concerned with "metaphysical guilt." Freud says: "[after the institution of the super-ego] the difference between an aggression intended and an aggression carried out lost its force. Hence forward a sense of guilt could be produced not only by an act of violence that is actually carried out (as all the world knows), but also by one that is merely intended (as psycho-analysis has discovered)" (*Civilization and Its Discontents*, 137). With the institution of the superego, an act of violence which we never intended, that is, which in fact we are never involved in can also produce the sense of guilt. The superego can never be external. If the "metaphysical guilt" in this sense disappears, the whole "sense of guilt" could not but disappear. We can say that Adorno tries to evoke the sense again in the passage quoted above.

44. Etō Jun, *Senkyuhyakuyonjuroku-nen Kenpo—Sono Kosoku* [*The 1946 Constitution—Its Restriction*] (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 1980), 95.

45. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 123–124; my italics [translation modified by HY].

46. Sigmund Freud, "Why War?" *S. E.*, 22: 215 [translation modified by HY].

47. *Ibid.*, 215.

Chapter 3

1. Japan's university system was established in 1869, succeeding three institutions that had been directly controlled by the Tokugawa Shogunate, for the purpose of promoting the Imperial Way. The three institutions were: the Shōheikō, which focused on Confucian learning; the Kaiseijo, which was in charge of translating various Western knowledges; the Igakujo, a treatment center and school of Western medicine. Their names were changed once the Meiji period came around: the Shōheikō was promoted

to University Main Campus from the title of the Shōhei school, the Kaiseijo from school status to the University South Campus, and the Igakujo, the medical school, became the University East Campus. The schools opened independently without relationship to each other. As a result, the national classicists (*Kokugaku-ha*), who advocated the Imperial Way came into conflict with the Chinese traditionalists (*Kangaku-ha*), who were supporters of Confucian learning; discord also arose between the Westernizers (*Yōgaku-ha*) and the national classicists as well as the Chinese traditionalists, which escalated into sharp contradictions. The national classicists and Chinese traditionalists lost the struggle, and as a result, the University Main Campus, which was under their control, closed down in July 1871. Not only the national classics and classical Chinese seminars but also the scholars of these disciplines were purged. Following these events the University South Campus, which handled the learning of foreign languages, was known from that moment on as the South School; the University East Campus, which taught western medicine, became known as the East School and was transformed into a vocational school administered by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture; the university system was thus abolished. The Ministry followed up these series of changes with the directive that “only by following the instruction of foreign teachers, can the students truly learn in their profession,” and temporarily shut down both the South and East schools in order to reorganize them into vocational schools. At this stage, the study of English, French, and German were required at the South School, and at the East School Latin and German had replaced English as prerequisites.

The next wave of the reorganization of higher education occurred in 1877, where the conceptualization of a “University” was put into practice with propositions stressing the importance of Japanese literature and Chinese language literatures. In that year the Ministry of Education reorganized the university system to include schools of law, science, and the liberal arts, and combined both the Kaisei School and the Tokyo Medical School to form Tokyo University. However, such reconstruction proceeded under the assumption that “it is insufficient to circumvent the pitfalls of old, entrenched habits by continuing to solely communicate through Japanese and Chinese languages; to combat this and to produce useful and talented persons, besides studying the English language, students will learn both history and philosophy.” The university’s new courses were held in English, and it was not until two years later that courses changed to being taught in Japanese. Later in 1886, the Tokyo Imperial University was formed through merging Tokyo University and the Imperial College of Engineering. (See *Fifty Years of Tokyo Imperial University*, vols. 1 & 2 [Tokyo Teikoku Daigaku Goju nen shi] [Tokyo: Tokyo Imperial University, 1932]) and Nakayama Shigeru, *The Birth of the Imperial University* [Teikoku Daigaku no Tanjō] [Tokyo: Chūōkōronsha, 1978].)

2. In 1891, the Tokyo School of Fine Arts was established as an institution directly under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, giving birth to the Japanese Art Revival Movement with Fenollosa and Okakura Kakuzō as the linchpin of the movement. The Tokyo School of Music, which was established in 1879 for the purposes of

Westernizing music, began investigating different forms of music while still including the study of traditional Japanese music. Okakura Kakuzō began his work as an examiner of music for the Ministry of Education in 1880, but was relieved from his post in 1882 and began a part-time position in the scribe division of the Ministry. By the time the Tokyo School of Music came about in 1887, Japanese music had been removed from the curriculum, while concerts and other celebratory events were held enthusiastically. After the Second World War, the Tokyo School of Music merged into the Tokyo University of the Arts, becoming its music department. (See *Tokyo Ongaku Daigaku Rokujugo nen shi* [Sixty-Five Years of the Tokyo University of Music] [Tokyo: Tokyo University of Music, 1972]) and *Tokyo Geijutsu Daigaku Hyaku nen shi, Tokyo Ongaku Gakko hen* [The Hundred Year History of the Tokyo University of the Arts, Tokyo School of Music Section], Vol. 1 [Tokyo: Ongaku no Tomo sha, 1972].)

3. Oscar Wilde, *The Artist as Critic: Critical Writings of Oscar Wilde*, ed. Richard Ellmann (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 315.

4. The Japanese did not first come into contact with modern Western painting as late as the Meiji period. In a certain sense the encounter began in the sixteenth century, which was accelerated halfway through the eighteenth century, when geometric perspective was imported into Japan, although such visual devices were applied by painters of *uki-e* and *megane-e* to surprise the viewer. It was not until Shiba Kōkan (1747–1818) did serious importation of Western painting begin. Such influence would be felt in the works of *ukiyo-e* painters such as Katsushika Hokusai and Andō Hiroshige. That is to say, the Japanese paintings sought by the European Impressionists were in reality already, to a certain extent, permeated by the influence of European painting. On a more general level, however, the paintings in the Edo period employed both Western line perspective and traditional parallel perspective (Kishi Fumikazu, *Edo no Enkin hō: Uki-e no shikaku* [The Perspectives of Edo and the Visuality of Uki-e] [Tokyo: Keisō, 1994]). Alternatively, we could say that it was a combination of the line perspective, which employed a fixed point of view, and the mobile viewpoint used by the traditional perspective (Suwa Haruo, *Nihon jin to Enkin hō* [The Japanese and Perspective] (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1998). Facing the crisis of art—the crisis of representation and doubt toward geometric perspectives—which became apparent with the advent of photography, the European Impressionists discovered Japanese *ukiyo-e*. What they discovered in the *ukiyo-e* was a position that both accepted and resisted geometric perspectives, a gesture that seemed to have been a step ahead of the Impressionists. Of course, most Japanese at that time did not conceive of it this way.

5. Several examples of this phenomenon can be found in Nagai Kafū's interest in the Edo period (one could call it a return to Japan), which was in fact caused by the French appreciation *ukiyo-e* such as Edmond de Goncourt's essays (Nagai, *On Edo Arts* [Edo Geijutsu Ron] [Tokyo: Iwanami Bunko, 2000]). The same goes for Kuki Shūzō's *The Structure of "Iki"* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2003).

6. Okakura Tenshin, *Nihon bijutsu shi* [History of Japanese Art] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), 245.

7. Karl Marx, *Surveys from Exile: Political Writings*, ed. David Fernbach (New York: Verso, 2011), 239.

8. [Translator's note. The Japanese "School of Obscurists" (*Mōrō-ha*) was a group of painters who were primarily active in the late Meiji and Taisho periods. Under the tutelage of Okakura Kakuzō, they experimented with and applied Western Impressionistic techniques with the aim of revitalizing traditional Japanese painting. Formally, in their attempt to express intangible elements such as light and water, the Obscurists forsook traditional line perspectives and used only *karabake* brushes (a dry brush used for shading in Japanese art) with minimal application of water while coloring. Most prominent figures include Yokoyama Taikan, Hishida Shunsō and Shimomura Kanzan. The term "Obscurist," curiously, was an epithet placed on this group of painters by critics who did not appreciate their work. For more information, see Noritake Tsuda, *A History of Japanese Art: From Prehistory to the Taisho Period* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 2009) and J. Thomas Rimer ed., *Since Meiji: Perspectives on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868–2000* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2012)].

9. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology in The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: Norton, 1972), 172.

10. *Ibid.*, 172.

11. Kakuzo Okakura, *The Ideals of the East with Special References to the Arts of Japan* (Rutland, Vt. and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1970), 1.

12. [Translator's note. Advaitism originates from Advaita, a concept meaning non-duality. The formal, doctrinal name of its practice is Advaita Vedānta, which goal is the attainment of liberation through recognizing the identity of the Self and the Whole under the continued guidance of a guru. Advaita Vendata is considered the most influential sub-school of the Vedānta school of Hinduism. For more information, see Eliot Deutsch, *Advaita Vedanta: A Philosophical Reconstruction* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1969).]

13. [Translator's note. Asian Stagnation can be seen as a prototypical Eurocentric ideal—one not solely attributable to Hegel—in which Europe, in contrast to the ostensibly stable and unchanging political, economic, and cultural formations of Asia between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, expressed its superiority through the flowering of Renaissance culture, the breakthroughs of Enlightenment thought, the development of technology and science, as well as ushering in the developmental force known as capitalism. While Hegel was notorious for positing this idea as an explicitly historical one—that Asia was the beginning of universal history and Europe the end—Asian Stagnation still directly or indirectly haunts modern and contemporary Eurocentric thought, where Asian countries are perceived as lacking certain features of modern (Western) institutions. Max Weber's classic *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* would be one example.]

14. Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea* (London and New York: Putnam, 1906), 11–12.

15. *The Ideals of the East*, 5, 10, 8.

16. Maruyama Masao, *Nihon no shisō* [Japanese Thought] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1961).

Chapter 4

1. Claude Simon, "Cher Kenzaburo Oé," *Le Monde*, September 21, 1995. Kenzaburo Oé, "Cher Claude Simon," *Le Monde*, September 28, 1995.

2. Kant himself viewed the non-Western world aesthetically. For instance, he wrote, "If we cast a fleeting glance over the other parts of the world, we find the Arab the noblest man in the Orient, yet of a feeling that degenerates very much into the adventurous." He claimed that the Arabs are "the Greeks of the Orient"; the Persians are "the French of Asia"; the Japanese are "the Englishmen of this part of the world." Furthermore, he said that native inhabitants of the Americas were the most sublime people of all the "savages." However, he found in Indians, Chinese, and Africans a "distortion" of humanity. In the end, what Kant found to be sublime was the attitude of warriors and the "culture" that drew on that attitude of warriors as its core. Of course, Kant's knowledge was based on nothing more than the European representations of his time. See Immanuel Kant, *Observations of the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, trans. John T. Goldthwait (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), 109–111.

3. Rather than an inversion of Hegel's materialism, Feuerbach's idea that considers God to be the essence of human self-alienation stems from Kant's theory of the sublime.

4. Karl Marx, *Capital*, vol. I (New York: Penguin, 1976), 125.

5. See Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

6. Even when bracketed, the "disinterest" of the aesthetic attitude could not then become free, because it became possible within the dominance of economic "interest." For instance, the simplistic distinction between things of artistic value and those with commodity value is a most banal and deceiving view. When a certain thing is considered to have true artistic value, it will be bought by museums and collectors because it also possesses commodity value.

7. James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (New York: Dial Press, 1963).

8. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Addresses to the German Nation*, trans. R. F. Jones and G. H. Turnbull (Westport, CT.: Greenwood, 1979), 47.

9. Kakuzō Okakura, *The Book of Tea* (London: Putnam, 1906), 7–8.

10. Tenshin Okakura, *Nihon bijutsushi* [History of Japanese Art] (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2001), 57–58.

11. For instance, Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, who often wrote works about Christ and the teachers of Christian doctrine, wrote: "It is ten years now since I was artistically enamored with Christianity and in particular Catholicism. 'The Temple of the Japanese Mother' in Nagasaki still lingers in my memory. . . . Only lately have I begun to love the man Christ of which the four gospels tell" ("Seihō no hito" [1927], *Akutagawa Ryūnosuke zenshū*, vol. 7 [Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1989], 432).

12. See Okakura Kakuzō, *The Awakening of Japan* (New York: Century Company, 1904).

13. Yanagi Muneyoshi, "Chōsen no tomo ni okuru sho" [Letter to a Korean Friend] *Kaizō* (June 1920).

14. *Ibid.*

Chapter 5

1. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Writings in General Linguistics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 94.

2. Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?" trans. Martin Thom, in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), 19.

3. Ukai Satoshi points out falsity in the recent argument that, while criticizing Fichte, seeks in Renan a unifying principle of de-essentialized, multicultural society. In fact, before the speech on the nation, Renan wrote in 1955 *General History and System of Comparison of the Semitic Languages* [*Histoire générale et système comparé des langues sémitiques*], in which he insisted that, equipped with the organic structure, Aryan languages were living languages that had incessantly developed and changed, and that the spirit of non-Aryans, of Semitic peoples in particular, was determined by the "agglutinate" structure of Semitic languages (Ukai, "'Shimin kyariban' aruiwa erunesuto runan ni okeru seishin no seijigaku" ["'Citizen Caliban' or Politics of Spirit in Ernest Renan"], in *Kokumin to wa nanika* [What is a Nation?] [Tokyo: Inscript, 1997], 251). That is, at one time, having recourse to comparative linguistics, he provoked anti-Semitism, and at the other time, in order to justify the reversion of Alsace-Lorraine—German-speaking provinces annexed to Germany as a result of the Franco-Prussian War—to France, he argued that the basis of a nation should be sought in the will of those who inhabited the region in question.

4. It is in the context of phonocentrism that Jacques Derrida investigates Saussure, who abstracts writing as *external*, and yet, according to Derrida, Saussure is not phonocentric, even though he seems so. Saussure excludes writing in the narrow sense, but this does not mean prioritization of speech; in his exclusion of writing, Saussure also excludes speech that is based on writing, and by doing so seeks "différance or arche-writing," which precedes the distinction between speech and writing: "Writing appears well before writing in the narrow sense; already in the difference or the arche-writing that opens speech itself" (Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976], 128).

5. Ferdinand de Saussure, "Cours de linguistique générale (1908–1909): Introduction (d'après des notes d'étudiants)," *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure* 15 (1957): 12.

6. Ferdinand de Saussure, *Saussure's Second Course of Lectures on General Linguistics (1908–1909): From the Notebooks of Albert Riedlinger and Charles Patois*, trans. Eisuke Komatsu and George Wolf (Oxford: Pergamon, 1997), 5a–6a.

7. Saussure, *Writings in General Linguistics*, 101–102.

8. *Ibid.*, 101.

9. Jonathan Culler, *Ferdinand de Saussure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 77.

10. Derrida finds the origin of the West's phonocentrism in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Even if there is such a *tradition*, however, it is with Romanticism that the prioritization of speech began; the Romantics saw its origin in Plato's text. By the same token, there was a thinker who highly appreciated *kana* phonetic signs over Chinese characters in eighth century Japan: Kūkai, who studied in China and introduced esoteric Buddhism to Japan. He argued that, since mantra—*shingon*, or the true word—was speech, *kana* phonetic signs, which could represent it, were superior to Chinese characters, and praised Japanese poems and stories written in the *kana* phonetic signs. Therefore it is not impossible to argue that there was phonocentrism in eighth century Japan. In reality, however, Chinese was considered superior, and rather than the exclusive use of *kana* phonetic signs, the mixture of these signs and Chinese characters was normal. It is Motoori Norinaga and his school in the latter half of the eighteenth century that gave prominence to the classics written in *kana* phonetic signs, such as *Record of Ancient Matters* [Kojiki] or *The Tale of Genji*. That is to say, these classic works were valued highly because of the phonocentrism of the eighteenth century, not because such phonocentrism actually existed in these works.

11. Saussure, *Writings in General Linguistics*, 112.

12. *Ibid.*, 115.

13. [Translator's note. Kobayashi Hideo is a linguist (1903–1978), not the literary critic of the same name.]

14. Tokieda Motoki, *Kokugogakushi* [History of Japanese Language Studies] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1940), 13.

15. Tokieda Motoki, *Kokugo kenkyūhō* [Methodology of Japanese Language Studies] (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1947), 52.

16. Tokieda, *Kokugogakushi*, 3–4.

17. Tokieda Motoki, *Kokugogaku genron* [Principles of Japanese Linguistics] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1941), 23.

18. *Ibid.*, 28.

19. Saussure, *Writings in General Linguistics*, 96.

20. Nakamura Yūjiro, *Nishida tetsugaku no datsukōchiku* [Deconstruction of Nishida Philosophy] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1987), 83–84.

21. Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 145.

22. Nishida Kitarō, *Nihon bunka no mondai* [Problems of Japanese Culture] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1940), 74.

23. Tokieda Motoki, "Chōsen ni okeru kokugo seisaku oyobi kokugo kyōiku no shōrai" [A Prospect for Policy and Education of Japanese Language in Korea], *Nihongo* 2, no. 8 (August 1942): 60.

24. Gotō Hitoshi, “Gengogakushi no naka no Kokusaigo-ron” [Theory of International Language in the History of Linguistics], *Gekkan gengo*, 12 (October 1983): 65.

25. It is a mistake to assume that Saussure was dismissive of the artificial international language. According to Gotō Hitoshi, in his *Cours* edited by Engler, Saussure does not deny in principle the possibility of the success of Esperanto, calling it “an attempt at an artificial language that appears to be successful” (Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, ed. Rudolf Engler [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1968], 170). Gotō points out the following: “More noticeably, in the *Cours* there is a passage that argues language’s analyticity by comparing Esperanto with Chinese (Ibid., 380). Here Esperanto has an equal status to Chinese as a language. It is Saussure who for the first time among linguists treated Esperanto as an accomplished fact rather than arguing its possibility” (Gotō, “Gengogakushi no naka no Kokusaigo-ron,” 66).

26. Still I believe that it is preferable to create a universal language based on English, which has in fact become a lingua franca already, with grammar as simple as Esperanto, to popularizing Esperanto or a new universal language.

Chapter 6

1. See Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism*, trans. Russell Moore (London: Zed Books, 1989).
2. Ibid., 62–64.
3. Maruyama Masao, *Nihon no shisō* [Japanese Thought] (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1961), 4–5.
4. Ibid., 20–21.
5. See Takeuchi Yoshimi, “Chugoku no kindai to nihon no kindai [Chinese Modernity and Japanese Modernity]” in *Nihon to ajia* [Japan and Asia] (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1993), 11–57.
6. Kakuzo Okakura, *The Ideals of the East* (London: J. Murray, 1903), 5, 7.
7. Watsuji Tetsurō, “Nihon ni okeru bukkyō shisō no ishoku [Transplantation of Buddhist Thought in Japan],” *Zoku nihon seishinshi kenkyū*, Watsuji Tetsuro zenshū, vol. IV, (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1962), 323.
8. Maruyama Masao, “Rekishī ishiki no ‘kosō’ [The Ancient Stratum of Historical Consciousness],” 1972, in *Chūsei to hangyaku* [Loyalty and Resistance] (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1998), 353–423.
9. See F. M. Cornford, “Greek Natural Philosophy and Modern Science,” in *The Unwritten Philosophy and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 81–94.
10. Maruyama Masao, “Nihon shihaisō no sensō sekinin [War Responsibility of the Ruling Class in Japan],” *Maruyama Masao shū Bekkan* (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1956), 16.
11. Sakaguchi Ango, “Zoku darakuron,” *Sakaguchi Ango zenshū*, vol. 14 (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1990), 587.
12. Choi Wonsik, *Kankoku no minzoku bungakuron* [The Theory of People’s Literature in Korea], trans. Yuko Aoyagi (Tokyo: Ochanomizu shobō, 1995), 181–182.

13. [Translator's note. Karatani puns on two Chinese characters that mean Chinese and Korean respectively, but share the same pronunciation as *kara* in the Japanese *kun* readings.]

14. Jacques Lacan, "Preface à l'édition japonaise des *Écrits*," *La lettre mensuelle de l'École de la cause freudienne* 3 (October 1981): 2–3.

15. Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, "The Faint Smiles of the Gods," trans. Tomoyoshi Genkawa, Bernard Susser, in *The Essential Akutagawa*, ed. Seiji M. Lippit (New York: Marsilio, 1999), 123–124.

16. *Ibid.*, 127.

17. Kawai Hayao, *Bosei shakai nihon no byōri* [Pathology of Maternal Society in Japan] (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1976), 23.

18. *Ibid.*, 176.

19. *Ibid.*, 177.

20. Jacques Lacan, *Autre Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 2001), 19 [brackets added by Karatani].

21. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage, 1978), 83.

22. *Ibid.*, 94.

23. Kobayashi Hideo (1902–1983) was a critic who had once criticized the literary theory of Marxism, but, after the communist party was oppressed and Marxists were converted, he dismissed the criticism that the literary theory of Marxism is dogmatism, and writes the following:

There is an issue here that should not be obscured. However paradoxical it sounds, I believe such writers subsisted on sheer dogmatism, even though they denounce it themselves. Theory is, in the first instance, a matter of doctrine. When an idea does not possess a universal communicable form, it has no capacity to influence society. Marxist writers had vitality precisely because they believed in these doctrinal characteristics of thought. Indeed, their achievements should be valued, and not reduced to the tedious question of what brand of dogmatism they represented, because they single-handedly undertook a project without precedent in our literary world; namely, to import a system of idea with its essentially dogmatic elements intact.

Perhaps the Marxists will not leave a single literary masterpiece to posterity. Perhaps much that goes on in their fiction is just a gathering of fantasy "people." But this should not be characterized as fictional success or failure owing to a given writer's peculiar taste or style. It has rather to do with fiction becoming twisted by ideology, with literary proportions becoming bloated on theory.

Japanese Naturalism is less a bourgeois than a feudal style of writing, and, contrary to the finest works of Western Naturalism that reflects a sense of historical time, the most distinguished of our Naturalist *watakushi shosetsu* reveal the limpid visage of a single persona. What the proletarian writers erased was this visage. Who can deny that a certain purifying erasure, through the force of

ideology, occurs in all Marxist writing? Compared to their literary victory over a predetermined literary temperament, their alleged inability to vividly depict the attitudes and tastes of fictional characters seems a matter of far lesser significance. (Kobayashi, "Discourse on Fiction of the Self," trans. Paul Anderer, *Literature of the Lost Home* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995], 80; translation modified.)

24. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), 160–162.

25. *Ibid.*, 162.

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